BEING MÉTIS: A HISTORY OF GABRIEL DUMONT AND MÉTIS IDENTITY

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Permission To Use

Abstract

I came to this work with the question of what makes Gabriel a hero for the Métis people, why is he still important today, and why is so little about him known within the public sphere in comparison to Louis Riel. I employ the theoretical framework of wahkootowin, with an awareness of Indigenous masculinity theories, in combination with new biography methodology within the field of Indigenous Studies to follow the Dumont family over three generations, focusing on themes of Métis identity to discover how their life decisions led to their Métis identity, and what being Métis looked like in their world. Ultimately, I illustrate that the Dumont family reveals connections between Métis identity and kinship, homelands, and culture. Further, Gabriel's life allows an exploration of Métis masculinity, and his position as a Métis hero, through Métis historical consciousness, allows his life to connect the past to the present and reveal the role of historical figures in contemporary Métis identity.

I first explore the role of kinship in Métis identity. Additionally, I explore the Dumonts' expression of their Métis identity and kinship beliefs through the practice of adoption. Next, this dissertation follows how the Dumont family spread across the northwest, incorporating the Métis homelands as their home, and the ways in which Métis people lived on the land. In the third chapter, this dissertation looks at Métis leadership through Gabriel, whose position as a leader signals his Métis identity. Establishing a framework to understand Métis leadership that combined democratic processes and wahkootowin to elect the best leader for the context, this chapter examines three periods of Gabriel's life: the buffalo hunt, St. Laurent de Grandin, and the 1885 North West Resistance. This leadership process resulted in consistency that was adaptable but uniquely Métis, but also excluded women from elected leadership. I then investigate Gabriel's use of his Métis identity, through cultural capital, to continue his leadership work to gain employment and political advocacy opportunities after the 1885 North West Resistance in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show and speaking engagements. Lastly, this dissertation incorporates oral interviews to explore Gabriel Dumont's place in Métis historical consciousness, elucidating how he connects the past to the present as a touchstone to Métis culture and resistance, influencing contemporary Métis identity.

In addition to these aspects of Métis identity, Gabriel's life allows the exploration of historical Métis masculinity. Responding to two Indigenous masculinities theories, I assert that

Gabriel's life demonstrates how historical Métis masculinity shows the influence of their First Nations and Euro-Canadian ancestors through a masculinity that centres wahkootowin with a non-hegemonic patriarchal structure. In such, it privileges Métis men, particularly in leadership positions, but does not subjugate Métis women, and considers both gender's roles as equally important. Taken together, Gabriel Dumont's life through the lens of new biography links the past to the present, provides opportunities for critical analysis and a Métis centered understanding of Métis identity. Ultimately, this dissertation demonstrates the importance of kinship to Métis identity, historically and contemporarily, and situates Gabriel Dumont as a important leader and political actor.

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Table of Contents

PERMISSION TO USE ..... **I**

ABSTRACT ..... **II**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **IV**

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **V**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **VII**

MY PLACE IN THIS RESEARCH **1**

AEN NAKISHKAWUK- INTRODUCTION **4**

LITERATURE REVIEW 14
THEORY 22
Wahkootowin *22*
Indigenous Masculinity Theories *25*
METHODOLOGY 29
Indigenous Studies Methodologies *30*
Community Service Learning *31*
New Biography *33*
Sources *36*
WHAT FOLLOWS 46

1- LI FAAMII- THE FAMILY **49**

LI MAARYAAZH- MARRIAGE 51
KAA OOPIKIHTAMASHOOK AKWA LII ZAAFA- ADOPTION OF CHILDREN 74
CONCLUSION 85

2- NUTR TAYR-OUR LAND **88**

WAAHKOOMIWAYHK-KINSHIP 92
PIMATSHIISHOOHK-LIVELIHOOD 107
KA TIPAYITUHK SOON TAYRAYN- PROPERTY 133
CONCLUSION 137

3- NUTR CHEF- OUR CHIEF **139**

MÉTIS LEADERSHIP 140
The Buffalo Hunt *146*
St. Laurent de Grandin *158*
1885 ..... *169*
CONCLUSION 182

4- NIYAANAN MICHIF- WE ARE MICHIF **186**

GABRIEL DUMONT'S CULTURAL CAPITAL 191
The Performer *195*
The Public Speaker *211*
CONCLUSION 228

5- KA KISKISKCHECHIK- THOSE WHO REMEMBER **230**

MÉTIS HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS 232
THE ROLE OF HISTORICAL FIGURES IN MÉTIS CULTURE AND IDENTITY 236
Collective Understandings of Gabriel Dumont *238*
Personal Interpretations of Gabriel Dumont *244*
CONCLUSION 258

CONCLUSION **260**

BIBLIOGRAPHY **266**
PRIMARY SOURCES 266
Newspapers *266*
Published Primary Sources *267*
Interviews *268*
SECONDARY SOURCES 269

List of Figures

Figure 1Gabriel Dumont circa 1885 courtesy of Montana Historical Society 5
Figure 2 Silversides *Fort des Prairies* 55
Figure 3 Dumont family and first generation of children 64
Figure 4 Madeleine and Gabriel Dumont c. 1860s Gabriel would have been in his twenties in this photo. Photo courtesy of Assumption College, Edmund Mallet Collection 69
Figure 5 Dumont family marriages to Laframboise and Berger families 71
Figure 6 Dumont and Laframboise Marriages 72
Figure 7 The Métis Nation Boundaries (Manitoba Métis Federation) 89
Figure 8 Saskatchewan District ca. 1900 University of Manitoba: Elizabeth Dafoe Library Map Collection 90
Figure 9 Map by Gerhard Ens in *Contours of a People* 96
Figure 10 Red River 1870 Annotated to highlight location of Ekapow and Ska-kas-ta-ow's riverlots in relation to St. Boniface. Credit Sprague and Frye 1983 98
Figure 11 Jean-Baptiste Thibault LAC Mikan 3221620 102
Figure 12 Métis Wintering Sites Western Canada Credit Doll, Kidd and Day 103
Figure 13 Extermination of the Buffalo adapted from drawing by William Temple Hornaday CC-by-sa-3.0 109
Figure 14 Painting by William Perehudoff 1961 Credit PAS S-ms-b 3118 110
Figure 15 Horse diffusion and population movements on the Great Plains c.1500-1800 Credit Calloway (2003) 113
Figure 16 Cart Trails and Métis Wintering Sites c 1850-60s Credit Troupe (2019) 119
Figure 17 Ca. 1885 Credit Morton Manuscript Collection University of Saskatchewan Special Collections c565 125
Figure 18 Louis Riel Library and Archives Canada/MIKAN 3531914 171
Figure 19 February 1st, 1878, Petition from the Parish of St. Laurent. 174
Figure 20 Father André Credit: Library Archives Canada/Mikan 3191900 175
Figure 21 Gabriel Dumont circa 1885-1895 courtesy Montana Historical Society 182
Figure 22 The Milk River Borderlands credit: Hogue (2015). 192
Figure 23 *The River Press*, June 3, 1885 194
Figure 24 Gabriel Dumont, 1885 at Fort Benton courtesy Montana Historical Society 195
Figure 25 Tatanka Iyotake and Buffalo Bill. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 200
Figure 26 Kwakwaka'wakw at Columbian Exposition Paris 1880 c. Popular Science Monthly Vol 43 Sept. 1893 203
Figure 27 Wild West show program 1886 Credit: Metis Museum Dennis and Jean Fisher Collection 210
Figure 28 Gabriel Dumont, approx. age fifty, with both medals and watch credit: Prince Albert Historical Society 217
Figure 29 Gabriel circa 1898 courtesy Montana Historical Society 229
Figure 30 AMNSIS Letterhead circa 1985. Credit An Institute of Our Own: A History of the Gabriel Dumont Institute 240
Figure 31 GDI Logo, different variations of this one image are used for different aspects of the Institute. Credit gdins.org 242
Figure 32 Gabriel Dumont Statue Saskatoon, Sk. Photo credit Cheryl Troupe *Prairie History* (2021) 260

My Place In this Research

It is important to address who I am and my positionality to this research. I am not Métis, I am a settler scholar, this history is not my history. However, I am connected to it in several ways. I was born and raised within the Métis homelands, raised as the adopted daughter of a settler family. I am racially white. Both sides of my family are immigrants. My paternal family immigrated from France to Ontario in the mid-nineteenth century. This family was linked to Manitoba and Saskatchewan where my father was raised. My maternal grandparents both immigrated from Denmark to the United States and then into Canada. This side of the family has connections to Manitoba (Red River), Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. I was born in Melville, Saskatchewan, and grew up in the Saskatoon area. My life was that of an urban child, my family no longer farming, and my education came through the Saskatoon Public School system.

This is all important because my education and my family informed my understanding of my place in the world but also the history of the land I grew up on. I had the benefit of growing up in middle class neighbourhoods with schools that promoted themselves as providing excellent education. However, through this education I learned little about Indigenous peoples and what I was taught in school, framed within my current knowledge, was often problematic.

Through my undergraduate courses as a History major, I began to realize how little I had been taught of how Canada functioned, the role of colonialism in our history, and the privilege that I—as a settler woman—have. I realized that I wanted to change my knowledge of Canadian history. I decided that Indigenous Studies was the best option for my doctoral degree. I wanted an education that helped me do this work in the best way possible.

I understand my work is built on the histories of Indigenous peoples, and that I as a settler scholar must acknowledge this relationship. Through my graduate education I have built relationships with the Métis community in both Saskatoon and the Edmonton area. I am ever thankful to those who have welcomed me into their spaces and shared their time, knowledge, and friendship with me. In return, I try to do my best to create research that responds to the questions and areas of interest they have guided me to. My time in Indigenous Studies, especially through conversation with Métis artist and scholar David Garneau, has also brought me to understanding my place within this academic community. I have a dual responsibility in my work: to the Métis

peoples whose histories my research is founded on, and the settler community that I come from. I discuss my community service learning and Indigenous Studies methodologies later in the Introduction Chapter, which is an important aspect of my accountability to the Métis community. Regarding my responsibility to the settler community, a main aspect is that I must speak to this community and act as a front-line resource regarding Indigenous topics. In Indigenous Studies, as with other areas connected to minority and/or oppressed groups, it is unfair to rely on Indigenous peoples to do all the work in educating the broader population, but I acknowledge I do not have the lived experience or knowledge of my Indigenous colleagues.[1] It is with this positionality and understanding of my role in Indigenous Studies that I turn to discussing how I came to the research contained in this dissertation.

Gabriel Dumont

If you live in Saskatoon, you are surrounded with the images of Gabriel Dumont. Your childhood likely included going to the historic site of Batoche, and in my childhood this meant learning about the 1885 North West Resistance. Too young to really remember details, I remember sitting in the Métis trenches at Batoche, hearing about the battle between the Métis and the Canadian government and finding the bullet holes in the church so clearly marked out. But I never really understood why a war had happened so close to my home. I do not think we were ever expected to understand how or why the 1885 North West Resistance happened. Rather, we went as a checkmark on our list of things to do as a child in school, relying on the Parks Canada employees to guide our learning. I remember seeing the Gabriel Dumont Institute on 22nd Street, close to downtown Saskatoon. I saw the statue of him on his horse at the riverbank. Along with Gabriel Dumont, the name Louis Riel was part of my life, we drove down Riel Trail (Highway 11) often, and I lived just south of Saskatoon on the same highway for over a decade. Along the highway, Red River carts are placed at each small town—a symbol of the prairies, but for many not understood as a symbol of Métis presence.

[1] Discussions of whether Indigenous Studies should be open to non-Indigenous peoples is a long debate and is discussed by Champagne. The role of White allies within academia is discussed by Millions. Additionally, in the anti-racism workshops I have taken the need for educated allies to act as the first point of contact has been discussed many times Erin Millions, "On Being a Scholar-Ally in the Wake of the Gerald Stanley Verdict," Active History, February 13, 2018, http://activehistory.ca/2018/02/on-being-a-scholar-ally-in-the-wake-of-the-george-stanley-verdict/; Duane Champagne, "American Indian Studies Is for Everyone," *American Indian Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (1996): 77–82, https://doi.org/10.2307/1184943.

For me, Gabriel Dumont was a figure I understood that was important, but like many settlers, never really understood why. As I grew up, I understood better that the Métis are an Indigenous peoples, and Gabriel Dumont was a Métis hero. Upon researching his life in my undergraduate work, I found myself left with more questions than answers. Why was he a hero? Why was his image so prevalent in this area while so little is known by most about him? Why was there so much more information on Louis Riel than Gabriel Dumont? The Métis however, they knew—he is their hero. It is to them I turn to understand why and how Gabriel Dumont is a hero and what his life can tell us about being Métis.

Aen Nakishkawuk- Introduction

The men rode up the side of the hill, their horses anxious under them knowing what was to come. Gabriel Dumont signaled for the group to stop. They waited; breaths held. Gabriel[1] *edged his horse forward, the wind blowing the hunters' scent away from the buffalo below them. He watched the herd, checked his men were ready, and signalled the charge. The hunters galloped down the bluff, their speedy mounts' legs pounding the earth taking them closer to the herd of buffalo. The buffalo snorted—their heads lifted from the grass, and they began to run. The hunters closed in on the herd, Gabriel held his gun, "le petit," at the ready, maneuvering his horse into the herd he chose his mark and, while riding at a full gallop, aimed for the heart. Steering his horse with his legs, Gabriel reloaded his gun—lead shot in his mouth pounding the gun butt on his saddle to compact the powder. It was dangerous: a horse could trip, a buffalo bull could charge them, guns could backfire. As the herd of buffalo disappeared the hunters circled back, each knowing exactly which buffalo he had shot. Gabriel stopped at the downed buffalo, propped it up on its knees, and began the butchering process that would be completed by his wife Madeleine and the children they had living with them that season. As hunt chief, Gabriel had shot more buffalo than his family needed. They would send the extra meat to the families who could no longer join the hunts, ensuring that everyone would be well stocked for the season.*[2]

[1] I refer to Gabriel Dumont as Gabriel within this dissertation. My naming practice within this dissertation is described on page 43.
[2] This paragraph is developed through a combination of information used in this dissertation regarding Gabriel's experience in the buffalo hunt.

Gabriel Dumont had been a buffalo hunter all his life, learning from his father and uncles who were also buffalo hunt chiefs. As a young boy he would also hunt with Jean Baptiste Wilkie's brigade, the largest in the region.[3]eth Gabriel grew up in a time when the Métis people along with the First Nations controlled the region. The fur trade was well established, and the

Figure 1Gabriel Dumont circa 1885 courtesy of Montana Historical Society

[3] Alexander Ross, *The Red River Settlement: Its Rise, Progress, and Present State, with Some Account of the Native Races and Its General History to the Present Day* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1856), http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/qPy5X.

Métis emerged in the northwest developing a culture and identity in connection to it. Born in 1837, Gabriel experienced the golden age[4] of being Métis, when they ruled the buffalo hunt and their homeland spread across the northwest. He was only the second generation of the Dumonts born in the region, but his family were already leaders in their communities and Gabriel's upbringing positioned him to be elected as buffalo hunt chief as a young adult. By Gabriel's adulthood the Dumont family would be linked to several prominent Métis families. The Dumonts helped establish Métis settlements, and they participated in battles all influencing Gabriel's life. For example, as a young boy in 1851, Gabriel fought at the Battle of Grand Coteau alongside his father and the Wilkie hunt brigade, demonstrating the bravery that he would come to be known for.[5] Gabriel continued to live the buffalo hunt life, marrying Madeleine Wilkie (daughter of buffalo hunt chief Jean Baptiste Wilkie), and becoming hunt chief himself. As buffalo numbers waned Gabriel's hunt brigade, including his father Ekapow, elected to create the permanent settlement of St. Laurent de Grandin on the South Saskatchewan River.[6] Batoche would be established shortly after on the opposite riverbank. It was here that the Métis petitioned for title to their land, as they became aware of the influx of European settlers on the horizon, and the lack of the Canadian government's recognition of their rights to the land. However, instead of receiving land title, they found themselves in a protracted battle with the Canadian Government. Gabriel again demonstrated his bravery, acting as the military leader for the Métis, Adjunct General to Louis Riel. The 1885 North West Resistance put Gabriel on the Canadian Government's—and the world's—radar, but for the Métis he and his family were already well known as community leaders. Following the Resistance, Gabriel did not stop his leadership duties; instead, he joined Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and became a public speaker, where he continued to advocate for the Métis people and their rights. Through the first three generations the Dumonts shifted between certain Métis lifestyles, both settled and mobile, participated in various Métis economic enterprises, and experienced firsthand events now considered significant in Métis history.

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[4] 1816-1869 is often referred to as the golden age of Métis history. D. Bruce Sealey, *The Métis: Canada's Forgotten People*, Subsequent edition (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Pemmican Pubns, 1981), 51.

[5] William Morton, "The Battle of Grand Coteau: July 13 and 14, 1851," in *Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1970), 45–59.

[6] "Metis Meetings," January 5, 1872, Richard C. Hardisty Fonds M477, Glenbow Archives, https://www.glenbow.org/collections/search/findingAids/archhtm/hardisty.cfm#series9.

Gabriel's role in the Resistance positioned him to be an important historical figure, a hero, for many Métis people. But the Resistance also brought widespread attention to Gabriel's life, his hunting abilities, marksmanship, and talent as a military leader becoming fodder for Canadian newspapers.[7] Despite this, Gabriel's life has received limited attention by scholars[8] and a largely one-dimensional portrayal in historical records, which has relegated him to myth through historical fiction.[9] In spite of his position as "Li Chef Michif," little is known about him beyond the mythmaking of him as a military genius and hero for a proud, but marginalized people.[10] While information is available on brief periods of Gabriel's life in both Canadian and Métis history, many questions remain about him. This dissertation seeks to expand the knowledge of Gabriel Dumont through a Métis and family orientated exploration of his life. I do this by focusing on the first three generations of the Dumont family in the northwest, beginning with Jean-Baptiste Dumont and his relationship with Josephte, and thematically follow the family through just over one hundred years to elucidate their Métis identity. I also follow Gabriel

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[7] "How Dumont Is Looked Upon by the Troops," *Winnipeg Daily News*, May 16, 1885, 3rd edition; "Riel Captured!...Dumont's Capture Certain," *The Kingston Daily News*, May 16, 1885; Matthew Barrett, "Hero of the Half-Breed Rebellion: Gabriel Dumont and Late Victorian Military Masculinity," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue d'études Canadiennes* 48, no. 3 (2014): 79–107.

[8] Gabriel's life is often mentioned within scholarly work, but limited work has focused directly upon his life. Matthew Barrett, "Hero of the Half-Breed Rebellion: Gabriel Dumont and Late Victorian Military Masculinity," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue d'études Canadiennes* 48, no. 3 (2014): 79–107; Brenda MacDougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades," in *The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories*, ed. Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 89–113; Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility: Metis Buffalo-Hunting Brigades," *Manitoba History*, no. 71 (2013): 21+; Adam Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves': A Political History of Métis Self-Determination in the North-West, 1830-1870" (Dissertation, Victoria, University of Victoria, 2014); Gerhard John Ens and Joe Sawchuk, *From New Peoples to New Nations: Aspects of Métis History and Identity from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries* (Toronto ; Buffalo ; London: University of Toronto Press, 2016).

[9] Jordan Zinovich, *Gabriel Dumont in Paris* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1999); Joseph Boyden, *Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont* (Toronto: Penguin Global, 2010); Sandra Lynn McKee, *Gabriel Dumont: Indian Fighter* (Calgary: Frontier Publishing Ltd, 1968).

[10] Darren R. Préfontaine, *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words* (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2011), 4.

Dumont's position within Métis historical consciousness to understand better how he, as a Métis hero, allows Métis people in the present to connect to the past.

To better understand the Dumont family's Métis identity it is important to first briefly explore the ethnogenesis of the Métis people. The ethnogenesis of the Métis people is linked to several key factors. First, their emergence was part of a broader shift in Indigenous cultures on the North American plains influenced by the introduction of "horses, new technologies, the ever-increasing external pressure from a westward expanding agrarian frontier, and the dictates of international mercantile economies."[11] Second, the marriages of French-Canadian voyageurs to several Plains First Nations' tribes created important alliances that allowed foundational populations of Métis to emerge across the prairies, such as in Red River and Fort Edmonton.[12] Third, the descendants of the first marriages created a culture that merged the voyageur culture with Indigenous culture informed by the numerous nations they were connected to via kinship and with their own language, Michif.[13] Fourth, geography influenced the ethnogenesis and expansion of the Métis as it was limited by the range in which the buffalo roamed and conflict with non-ally First Nations, like the Dakota and Blackfoot.[14] As a result, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Métis were established in the region, had their own culture and language connected to the buffalo hunt, and politically expressed themselves in the 1816 Battle of Seven Oaks. The 1821 merger of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) saw Métis families and

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[11] Brenda MacDougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades," in *The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories*, ed. Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 91.

[12] Jennifer S. H. Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities," *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3, no. 1 (1983): 39–46; MacDougall and St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades"; John E Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis," *Prairie Forum* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 1–14; Marcel Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West*, Aboriginal Education Collection (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1986), https://archive.org/details/uap_9781772121377; Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility: Metis Buffalo-Hunting Brigades," *Manitoba History*, no. 71 (2013): 21+; Nicole St-Onge and Carolyn Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web: Mobility and Kinship in Metis Ethnogenesis," in *Contours of a People Metis Family, Mobility, and History*, ed. St-Onge, Nicole, Podruchny, Carolyn, and Macdougall, Brenda (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 59–92, http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3571331.

[13] MacDougall and St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades."

[14] MacDougall and St-Onge.

communities create alliances through marriages that linked the most western Métis families to Red River and Pembina based families, providing the knowledge and support necessary to hunt throughout the entirety of the northern plains.[15]

Métis extended family structure is important because it is intrinsically connected to Métis culture, values, and identity. By the early nineteenth century, Métis families had created webs of kinship across the Métis homelands. These kinship ties supported this highly mobile population as they headed deeper into the western plains following the buffalo.[16] Women held an important role in Métis family marriage patterns, so much so that Métis life was "characterized by matriorganization."[17] As explored in this dissertation, Métis kinship patterns maintained consistency in both marriage and residency patterns within hunting brigades and Métis settlements. Hunting brigades were established on an extended family structure, and while elected leadership was male centred, several scholars have demonstrated the influence of women in the establishment of these extended family systems.[18] These scholars have shown how men often took up residency with his wife's family, even temporarily. As such, matrilocal residency patterns are common in Métis family networks. Métis marriages joined together the kin of both spouses to create the interlocking web of kinship Métis society is known for.[19]

Following patterns likely inherited from First Nations band societies, this kinship system linked families together. Because the Métis people emerged through the commercial buffalo hunt,

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[15] MacDougall and St-Onge, 105; Cheryl Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories: Land Use, Gender and Kinship in the Qu'Appelle Valley, 1850-1950" (Ph.D., Saskatoon, Sk, University of Saskatchewan, 2019), 25, http://hdl.handle.net/10388/12122.
[16] MacDougall and St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades," 90.
[17] Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities," 39.
[18] Cheryl Lynn Troupe, "Métis Women: Social Structure, Urbanization and Political Activism, 1850-1980" (Masters Thesis, Saskatoon, Sk, University of Saskatchewan, 2009), http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/etd-12112009-150223; Diane Payment, *Batoche (1870-1910)*, Collection Soleil (Saint-Boniface, Man: Editions du Blé, 1983); Martha Harroun Foster, *We Know Who We Are: Métis Identity in a Montana Community* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006); Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities"; Macdougall and St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility"; Brenda Macdougall, *One of the Family: Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).
[19] Troupe, "Métis Women," 61–62.

this lifestyle influenced Métis social organization. The hunting brigades were organized on extended family bands, the male head of family becoming the leader of the brigade.[20] After the 1821 HBC merger, a monopoly formed in the provisions trade and allowed the Métis to expand into the American buffalo robe market, and move from family based brigades to the large bi-annual hunts the Métis are well known for.[21] As such, by the mid-nineteenth century the commercial production of the buffalo hunt reflected Métis understandings of territory, resources, and influenced how families organized themselves. Métis families' extended kinship, created through intermarriage patterns explored in this dissertation, provided the manpower necessary for the labour of the hunt to provide economic success.[22] Men and women equally contributed to the buffalo hunt in complementary roles, creating a family-centric economic activity. Men would hunt, organize, lead, and protect the camps while women processed the meat and hides, and managed the daily life of the camp.[23] Through the mid-nineteenth century some Métis families would choose to follow the buffalo further west, 'wintering over' to remain close to the winter ranges of the buffalo instead of returning a Métis settlement like Red River or Pembina. These families would winter over with their extended family and by 1870 these wintering camps began to shift into more permanent settlements.

However, while Métis community and family structure had consistency, flexibility existed, especially as hunt brigades began to create permanent settlements. For example, by the early 1870s some families who had married into and lived with their wife's family's hunting brigade, would choose to leave to join the husband's relatives, demonstrating the "fluid boundaries of these groupings and the interconnectedness of a network of Métis communities."[24] These flexible extended family networks created a structure that linked extended kin together, established and maintained Métis culture and identity, and allowed for political, social, and economic needs to be met. It is in this context that this dissertation explores the Dumont family's development of Métis identity.

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[20] Troupe, 54.
[21] Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories," 76–77.
[22] Troupe, 78–79; St-Onge and Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web"; Macdougall and St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility"; MacDougall and St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades."
[23] Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories," 82–84.
[24] Troupe, "Métis Women," 59–60.

Identity as a term is imprecise and is a composite of many different aspects of someone's life and worldview, and as such Métis identity as a term is also complex. The Métis were a culturally distinct group, created and connected through the relationships of individuals, families, and communities.[25] Their Indigenous cultural identity is reflected in their "values, beliefs, and worldviews," but individuals may have identified themselves in multiple ways beyond their culture.[26] As such, identity studies are also complex with layers and critiques, and this study turns to Barbara Voss's definition of identity as: both personal and collective, developed through internal experiences and external forces, not passive and continues to evolve, exists in the space between sameness and difference, and how one positions themselves in affinity with others.[27] Identity also incorporates the way people position themselves into the narratives of the past and is influenced by the shared ways their culture understands the past.[28] Identity studies have tended to not consider the holistic experience of identity, but more recent studies have brought in threads of gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity to counter this.[29] Social and cultural identities are shaped through processes of change that are not always apparent.[30] Closely connected to identity is the study of ethnogenesis, a theoretical term used to explore the development of ethnic groups, but also draws attention to the transformations of social and cultural identities.[31] Postmodern

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[25] Brenda Macdougall, *One of the Family: Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 22.
[26] Hilary N. Weaver, "Indigenous Identity: What Is It, and Who Really Has It?," *American Indian Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (2001): 240.
[27] Barbara L. Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis: Race and Sexuality in Colonial San Francisco* (Gainsville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2015), 68–69.
[28] Naomi Rosh White, "Marking Absences: Holocaust Testimony and History," in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, 2002, 180, http://www.vlebooks.com/vleweb/product/openreader?id=none&isbn=9780203435960.
[29] Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis*, 82–87.
[30] Voss, 83–84; Stuart Hall, "Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'?," in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, by Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (1 Oliver's Yard, 55 City Road, London EC1Y 1SP United Kingdom: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2011), 1–17, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446221907.n1.
[31] Ethnos is synonymous with the Latin gens and natio which have been often used in the English language as nation, people and ethnic group. The related terms of race, ethnie, nationhood, peoplehood are explored in this dissertation's literature review. Michel Bouchard, "Ethnogenesis," in *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, ed. H. Birx (Thousand Oaks California: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2006), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412952453; Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis*; Barbara L. Voss, "What's New? Rethinking Ethnogenesis in the Archaeology of Colonialism," *American Antiquity* 80, no. 4 (October 2015): 655–70, https://doi.org/10.7183/0002-7316.80.4.655.

definitions of ethnic groups refer to identity, external boundaries, and as heterogenous (members of a family may each have a different relationship to their ethnic identity). Primordialist theories emphasize intragroup cohesion and the need for connection and belonging.[32] Elizabeth Sperry refers to William Sturtevant who coined the term, defining it as the establishment of group distinctiveness. Sperry notes that ethnogenesis has since evolved as a major concept that embodies the dynamic and dramatic processes of change that ethnic identities undergo through interactions with others. Thus, she defines ethnogenesis as a series of "broad transformational processes" of a particular group's distinctive ethnic identity through time.[33] Ethnogenesis is a process that takes place and changes over time as the group is constantly evolving a process that continues over time through families and communities.[34] As a theory, ethnogenesis has been deployed in a multitude of ways. Originally coined in the nineteenth century, ethnogenesis studies held an emphasis to the studies of "Asian and European 'tribes,' racial classifications, and social formations."[35] More recently ethnogenesis studies have taken broader applications of the term, including the emergence of well-defined ethnic practices, transformations of ethnic identity through new relations such as in colonial frontiers, processes of fusion where people join together into a shared identity, fission where people of a shared ethnicity develop new identities, migration and displacements' creation of new identities, transformation of non-ethnic identities into ethnic identities, development of new ethnic identities through shared experiences of oppression or resistance, and development of new ethnic identities to maintain access to power or resources.[36] Thus, ethnogenesis is a process where individuals interact in a new setting and solidify relationships into a cohesive group with a shared meaning system, it is a macro process

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[32] Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis*, 83–86.
[33] Elizabeth Sperry, "Ethnogenesis of Metis, Cree and Chippewa in Twentieth Century Montana" (Masters Thesis, University of Montana, 2007), https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/385; Heather Devine, *People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660-1900* (Calgary, Alta.: Lancaster: University of Calgary Press; Gazelle, 2004); John E Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis," *Prairie Forum* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 1–14.

[34] Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis*, 97.
[35] T.M. Weik, "The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 43 (2014): 293, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-102313-025920.
[36] Weik, "The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis"; Voss, "What's New?," 658.

that is created through the experiences of many (micro) experiences.[37] As Voss demonstrates regarding the Californio ethnogenesis, ethnogenesis is a process that can be both immediate and incremental, taking place over generations, maintained and developed through the adoption of cultural, material, and political practices.[38] Voss uses the lens of material culture, to show how physical objects can provide better understanding to the broad process of ethnogenesis and provide details into the roles of gender and social identification for the group.[39] Similarly, Heather Devine explores Métis and Indigenous ethnogenesis through the transformational process of a family. In doing so Devine demonstrates how decisions made by family members affected their identity, with some in the early nineteenth century adopting a Métis identity as they settled in the Athabasca and Red River regions in the Northwest, while other members returned east. Devine demonstrates the ways in which kinship and geography as well as livelihood all influenced the ways the Desjarlais family members incorporated into the Métis people, the same external factors that helped shape the emergence of the Métis as a people.[40] John Foster's discussion of Métis ethnogenesis also uses individuals to provide examples of the context and processes he argues was vital to Métis ethnogenesis.[41] In a more contemporary context, studies on immigrant families have traced the ethnogenesis of first and second generation children in the United States. Ruben Rumbaut demonstrates how following the second generation of immigrants demonstrates a new segmented version of assimilation, an ethnogenesis process that began with

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[37] Voss, "What's New?," 660.
[38] Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis*.
[39] Cordell and Yannie discuss how one of the problems within archaeology research of ethnogenesis is their inability to understand the individual experience and influence in the process. They acknowledge the inability to access the "micro" approach in their field and suggest this is best done through a mixed methods approach including historical documentation. Linda S. Cordell and Vincent J. Yannie, "Ethnicity, Ethnogenesis, and the Individual: A Processual Approach Toward Dialogue," in *Processual and Postprocessual Archaeologies: Multiple Ways of Knowing the Past*, by R.W. Preucel (South Illinois University Press, 1991), 96–107; Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis*.
[40] While Devine differentiates between metis for in Athabasca region and Métis in the Red River area, this dissertation is following more recent scholarship in using the term Métis for both. Heather Devine, *People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660-1900* (Calgary, Alta.: Lancaster: University of Calgary Press; Gazelle, 2004).
[41] John E Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis," *Prairie Forum* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 1–14.

the first generations of immigrant children and their parents.[42] The Dumont family's decisions incorporated them into the already emerging Métis families and communities, aiding their development of a Métis identity.

While Gabriel's life story offers insight into various aspects of Métis identity, it is important to note that, in many ways his life was uniquely privileged, which was not the case for all Métis people. His leadership and notoriety led to substantial evidence of his life, making him a valuable access point to broader Métis themes. I argue that the Dumont family demonstrates how Métis identity is intrinsically connected to kinship, homelands, and culture. Decisions made by Dumont family members were influenced by the forces around them in connection to kinship and the geography they resided in setting the context for the Dumont family to become Métis. Their marriages choices incorporated them into Métis families and communities, the land they resided on was influenced through marriage and livelihood choices and shaped their understanding of home, and through this process they incorporated a Métis identity including culture and worldviews. Through this process the Dumont family members in the northwest saw themselves as part of the Métis community and they were seen as Métis by those community members. Additionally, Gabriel's role as a hero, incorporates him into Métis historical consciousness. As such, contemporary Métis interpretations of Gabriel's life events add depth and nuance to understanding his significance to the Métis people, which has not been captured by the dominant Canadian narratives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gabriel unquestionably identified as Métis and others recognized him as Métis.[43] He knew who his people and community were, and he spent his lifetime working toward their benefit. Owing to this, my research, which resides within the broader field of Métis Studies,[44]

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[42] Ruben G. Rumbaut, "Ethnogenesis: Coming of Age in Immigrant America," in *Ethnicities Children of Immigrants in America*, by Alejandro Portes (University of California Press, 2001), 1–17, https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520230118.001.0001.

[43] The term Métis was widely adopted during twentieth-century political activism. The Métis have used several terms to identify themselves, including "Michif." However, this is the standard term currently used in Métis Studies, and as such this dissertation uses this term throughout.

[44] Barkwell and Prefontaine have created a comprehensive bibliography of publications within Métis Studies until 2016. Lawrence J Barkwell and Darren Prefontaine, *A Métis Studies Bibliography: Annotated Bibliography and References* (Saskatoon, Sk: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2016).

contributes to the current emphasis on a peoplehood or nation-based approach. Previous scholarship in Métis Studies has leant toward two conceptions of Métis identity: racialization, where a person of mixed Indigenous and settler descent is considered metis, or a peoplehood approach that considers Métis as being part of the Métis Nation.[45] Academic debates continue over the terms peoplehood and nationhood. Most recently Chris Andersen has directed this conversation in Métis studies, his chapter "Peoplehood and the Nation: Core Concepts for a Critical Métis Studies" provides a substantial overview of the discussion regarding these terms. Andersen concludes by encouraging scholars to think of the "analytical relationship between nationhood and peoplehood as two sides of the same coin— nationhood concerns itself with imagining itself internally while peoplehood is useful for exploring external relationships with other peoples."[46] I add to this conversation by also referring to Anthony Smith's work regarding the term ethnie and its relationship to nation. Smith also discusses the difficulties in the terms available within the English language regarding an ethnic group or community, referring to 'people' as an ambiguous term that carries its own connotations. Smith suggests the use of the French term ethnie that places an emphasis on the cultural differences with a sense of historical community. Smith determines that an ethnie has a shared past built on historical consciousness; a distinctive shared culture, including language, religion, and laws; a homeland that may be currently occupied or exist within memory; and lastly a sense of solidarity.[47] Scott Lyons brings Smith's work into the Indigenous Studies realm to answer the question of if pre-Columbian era Indigenous groups were nations. Lyons places Smith's work of ethnie as the predecessor of nationalism. In a time where debate occurs on if Indigenous peoples can be defined as nations from time-immemorial, Lyons argues that the term ethnie is an effective basis for contemporary claims of sovereignty.[48] Altogether, with these understandings I use a peoplehood approach acknowledging the connections between these terms rather than the differences. This literature

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[45] Chris Andersen, *Metis: Race, Recognition, and the Struggle for Indigenous Peoplehood* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014).
[46] Chris Andersen, "Peoplehood and the Nation Form: Core Concepts for a Critical Métis Studies," in *A People and a Nation: New Directions in Contemporary Métis Studies*, ed. Jennifer Adese and Chris Andersen (UBC Press, 2021), 34.
[47] Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Reprint edition (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991).
[48] Scott Richard Lyons, "Nationalism," in *Native Studies Keywords*, ed. Stephanie Nohelani Teves, Andrea Smith, and Michelle Raheja, 1 edition (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2015), 157–67.

review first discusses the necessity of a peoplehood approach to Métis studies, then provides an overview of the development of scholarship on Métis identity. Altogether this provides an understanding of the foundation of scholarship that this dissertation explores through the concepts of kinship, homelands, leadership, culture, and historical consciousness.

Jennifer Adese and Chris Andersen (2021) recently promoted the peoplehood approach in their edited collection, *A People and a Nation,* which considers the complexity of both historical and contemporary Métis identity.[49] Andersen and Adese acknowledge the binary debate on Métis identity—peoplehood versus racialization—and support the notion of a single Métis people.[50] They argue that classifying the Métis as a single people, or nation, is grounded in a form of political consciousness with common roots—territory—and it "embodies cultural and political symbols, discourses, traditions and myths that anchor and (re)produce these perceptions of origins and commonality."[51] Most importantly, Andersen and Adese contend that it is imperative to reflect the manner in which people(s) understood themselves historically for a compelling analysis of contemporary identity.[52]

The shift to a peoplehood approach in Métis Studies is not new, and Andersen has been a leading advocate for such an approach. In his book, *Métis* (2014), Andersen rejects the notion of Métis being defined as anyone of mixed descent.[53] While previous scholarship has included broad conceptions of being Métis, such as families and communities that were of mixed descent but perhaps not part of the Métis Nation, instead, Andersen suggests that historical Métis identity was a political self-consciousness.[54] He thus concludes that a peoplehood approach provides a clearer and more accurate understanding within Métis Studies, as it views the Métis as a unique people, not just as individuals (and communities) of mixed descent. It is important to understand that in advocating for a peoplehood approach within Métis Studies, Andersen does not disregard

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[49] Jennifer Adese and Chris Andersen, eds., *A People and a Nation: New Directions in Contemporary Métis Studies* (UBC Press, 2021).
[50] Adese and Andersen, *A People and a Nation*, 8–14.
[51] Adese and Andersen, 14.
[52] Adese and Andersen, 14.
[53] Chris Andersen, *Metis: Race, Recognition, and the Struggle for Indigenous Peoplehood* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014).
[54] Chris Andersen, "Moya `Tipimsook ('The People Who Aren't Their Own Bosses'): Racialization and the Misrecognition of 'Métis' In Upper Great Lakes Ethnohistory," *Ethnohistory* 58, no. 1 (January 1, 2011): 37–63, https://doi.org/10.1215/00141801-2010-063.

the histories of other communities that were of mixed descent but not politically connected to the Métis Nation.[55] However, an issue arises when individuals and groups claim Indigenous identity through the term "Métis," defining it as being of mixed descent, as this undermines and destabilizes the Métis Nation. Andersen cautions that the deep complexity of Métis identity cannot be relegated only to those of mixed descent, and the term "Métis" is best defined through the lens of peoplehood, which goes beyond a collective consciousness and common culture to a political organization that established civil order and defended its territory.[56]

Diverse and problematic interpretations of Métis identity are evident in earlier studies that took a more racialized view of the Métis while still providing important insights. Marcel Giraud's expansive study, *The Metis in the Canadian West* (1945), while filled with some problematic conclusions, demonstrates some valuable information regarding Métis people.[57] Giraud frames the Métis as people of mixed Indigenous descent, not a distinct people, and he assumes the Métis ceased to exist: assimilated into Canadian society. Despite this, Giraud's work provides facets of information when you read beyond his racial bias, such as their economic role, employment, and details on the Red River and North West Resistances. From a similar period, George Stanley's (1936) work on the Métis also viewed them in the lens of a racialized definition but focused primarily on the Resistances as part of Canadian history.[58] As with Giraud, Stanley provides some important insight to the Métis and the resistances, such as noting the lack of humanity that the federal government took regarding the Métis in these events. Additionally, Stanley's (1949) translation and publication of Gabriel Dumont's version of the North West Resistance provides a balanced view of Dumont's life and his recollection of the Resistance.[59]

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[55] Andersen has developed and advocated for this approach in several publications, including those listed here, demonstrating that he has been promoting this approach for over a decade. Adese and Andersen, *A People and a Nation*; Andersen, *Metis*; Andersen, and "Moya `Tipimsook ('The People Who Aren't Their Own Bosses')."
[56] Andersen, "Moya `Tipimsook ('The People Who Aren't Their Own Bosses')."
[57] Marcel Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West*, Aboriginal Education Collection (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1986).
[58] George Francis Gillman Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions* (London: Longmans, Green and co, 1936).
[59] Gabriel Dumont, "Gabriel Dumont's Account of the North West Rebellion, 1885," trans. George F.G. Stanley, *The Canadian Historical Review* 30, no. 3 (1949): 249–69, https://doi.org/10.3138/CHR-030-03-03.

The rise of social history saw increased attention on Métis history. Scholarship from a handful of academics explored Métis communities from the great lakes to the plains, highlighting topics of gender and economies.[60] Importantly, the edited collection (three volumes) by Antoine Lussier and D. Bruce Sealey (1978), shifted from the racialized view of the Métis to taking a peoplehood approach.[61] This collection begins with a quote from Al Chartrand, that situates the Métis, who "unlike others of mixed ancestry in Canada once constituted a strong cultural and political force on the prairies," as a culturally distinct people.[62] The three volumes of this collection feature new scholarship alongside previously published articles regarding Métis life. Each volume features chronological accounts of Métis life from historical origins to contemporary issues at the time of publication.[63] Almost a decade later, the second collected edition regarding Métis people, *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America* (1985) contains a series of papers developed through a Métis studies meeting at the Newberry Library in 1981. This collection through four parts explores a variety of subjects connected to Métis identity and ends with the question of Métis peoplehood, and how it can be framed while acknowledging the historical variability of Métis reflected in the collection.[64] These works set the standard for future research on the Métis people, and conversations of Métis identity continued to spring forward in the field.

My research builds off historical studies that focused on the emergence and sociocultural organization of Métis communities, providing a strong foundation for understanding historical Métis identity. However, most studies focus on Métis community and identity from a macro level, leaving individual understandings of identity unexplored. Foundationally much of the conversations of Métis ethnogenesis refer to John E. Foster's (1994) article that argues Métis

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[60] Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwywer, 1999); Jennifer S. H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country*, Oklahoma paperbacks ed (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis."

[61] Antoine S. Lussier et al., *The Other Natives, the Métis*, Barron Native Studies Collection (Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Press : Editions Bois-Brûlés, 1978).

[62] Lussier et al.

[63] Lussier et al.

[64] Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S. H. Brown, eds., *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, Manitoba Studies in Native History 1 (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985).

ethnogenesis developed because fur trade men decided to remain in the northwest 'wintering over,' rather than returning east at the end of the season. The practice led to longer formed relationships and allowed for the unique culture and way of life of the Métis to emerge.[65] In *From New Peoples to New Nations: Aspects of Métis History and Identity from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries* (2016), Gerhard Ens and Joe Sawchuk suggest that Métis ethnogenesis is ongoing, and the definition of who is Métis is continuously challenged because classifications are influenced both from outsider and insider views. They demonstrate how geography was an important aspect of Métis ethnogenesis by exploring the communities of mixed descent in other areas of North America that did not emerge with a Métis identity, supporting, indirectly, a peoplehood approach to Métis history.[66] Additionally, while focusing on colonial constructions of race Michel Hogue's *Metis and the Medicine Line: Creating a Border and Dividing a People* (2015) also speaks to geography, Métis identity, and Métis ethnogenesis. Hogue argues that the forty-ninth parallel required the use of categorization of Indigenous nations through the construct of race. Colonial governments utilized these categories to counter Métis sovereignty, allowing the established border to control the movements of Indigenous peoples. Hogue, thus, defines the Métis as a group of interconnected communities of kinship networks, descending from encounters of European and Indigenous groups that have gone through an ethnogenesis to create distinct peoples shown through their unique language, dance, art, and religious practices as well as their position within the trade system.[67] Nicole St-Onge, Carolyn Podruchny, and Brenda Macdougall's *Contours of a People: Métis Family, Mobility, and History* (2012) investigates Métis identity through family, community, and location. The authors argue that the Métis are distinct, politically and socially, because of their mobility and sense of homelands.[68]

Shifting to focus on a single community, Macdougall's *One of the Family* (2010), focuses on the genealogy of the founding families of Sakitawak (Île-à-la-Crosse) and Métis ethnogenesis

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[65] John E Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis," *Prairie Forum* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 1–14.
[66] Gerhard John Ens and Joe Sawchuk, *From New Peoples to New Nations: Aspects of Métis History and Identity from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2016).
[67] Michel Hogue, *Metis and the Medicine Line: Creating a Border and Dividing a People* (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2015) 3.
[68] Nicole St-Onge, Carolyn Podruchny, and Brenda Macdougall, *Contours of a People Metis Family, Mobility, and History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012).

using the theoretical framework of wahkootowin.[69] Macdougall argues this principle influenced the community's choices and ways of relating to each other, helping to establish Métis community and identity.[70] In addition to important applications of Foster's theory of Métis ethnogenesis, Macdougall's use of the theoretical lens of wahkootowin directly informs this dissertation. Also focusing on a single region, Nicole St-Onge's (2004) study of Saint-Laurent Manitoba reveals the socio-economic elements of Métis identity. St-Onge suggests that Métis identity was intrinsically connected to class, and that capitalism and increased racism produced the Métis as a marginalized class caught in a cycle of poverty and seasonal work.[71]

Providing an even narrower lens regarding Métis ethnogenesis is Heather Devine's (2004) work on the Desjarlais family. It is perhaps the most useful for this dissertation in terms of understanding a family's ethnogenesis. Devine, like St-Onge, demonstrates how identity within the family differed depending on an individual's occupations and geographic location. Devine finds a connection between economic structures and Métis identity through occupational choices of the family, suggesting that these choices influenced social class, marriage choices, and kinship.[72] Most importantly regarding my work, Devine's chapter four takes John Foster's framework for Métis ethnogenesis and traces several Desjarlais engagés' migrations to the interior, through their relationships with Indigenous women, and follows their descendants to determine how "social, political, and economic factors influenced the development of their ethnic identities" demonstrating the family level experiences of the larger processes of ethnogenesis.[73] Also using biography is Doris Jeanne Mackinnon's exploration of the lives of Métis women. Mackinnon offers understanding of Métis women's identity, particularly in the post-fur-trade era by using biography as a lens into this period.[74] Mackinnon notes that Métis identity was based on culture, and "their stories raise questions about the permeable boundaries of identity for many other Metis people during the transitional period after the fur trade, and indeed in contemporary

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[69] Macdougall, *One of the Family*.
[70] Macdougall, *One of the Family*.
[71] Nicole St-Onge, *Saint-Laurent, Manitoba: Evolving Métis Identities, 1850-1914*, edition (University of Regina Press, 2004).
[72] Heather Devine, *People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660-1900* (Calgary, Alta.: Lancaster: University of Calgary Press; Gazelle, 2004).
[73] Heather Devine, *People Who Own Themselves*, 6.
[74] Doris Jeanne MacKinnon, *Metis Pioneers: Marie Rose Delorme Smith and Isabella Clark Hardisty Lougheed* (Edmonton, Alberta: The University of Alberta Press, 2018).

society, as there is no consensus on the 'idea of being Metis in Canada today.'"[75] Taken together, these studies attest to how defining Métis identity is complicated. Historically, identity was expressed in multitudes of ways, and life choices influenced how someone identified and how others recognized them. Decisions were determined by not only the location of a person or family, but also factors such as occupation, religion, and their community. This historiography demonstrates the foundations of understanding Métis ethnogenesis and identity.

My research confirms that the Dumont family's decisions integrated them into existing Métis communities and a shared understanding of being Métis. While explorations of Gabriel's life have offered a foundational understanding of his lived experiences, large gaps remain. Existing biographies of Gabriel have primarily resided within the realm of public history. George Woodcock's *Gabriel Dumont: The Métis Chief and His Lost World* (1975) is the only comprehensive biography on Gabriel, and Woodcock notes that Gabriel "was not thought of by the world because the world did not know of him."[76] Woodcock explains that he was fascinated by the fact that Louis Riel became the symbol of the Métis in Canadian minds rather than Gabriel, claiming that Canadians prefer martyrs (Louis Riel) over heroes (Gabriel).[77] As such, Woodcock's interest in Gabriel was inspired by questions of Canadian, rather than Métis, identity and culture.[78] In a traditional biographical approach, Woodcock explores Gabriel's life in chronological order. He is preoccupied with Gabriel's military proficiency, and his focus on Gabriel after the Resistance is fleeting, with only twenty of the 250 pages in his book covering the period after the Resistance. Further, as a public history work, Woodcock's book lacks citations and any ability to confirm information contained within it, limiting its use academically.

Written in the same period as Woodcock's work, but not published until 2017, Charles Duncan Thompson's book, *Red Sun: Gabriel Dumont, The Folk Hero*, creates an archive of oral histories on Gabriel. Thompson began his research after being contracted by the Dumont family in 1965, and he aimed to interview all of Gabriel's living relatives. This collection of knowledge allows future Métis generations to hear the voices of the Dumont family, creating what Lawrence

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[75] MacKinnon, *Metis Pioneers*, xxiii.
[76] Originally published in 1975, George Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont* (Markham, Ont.: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2003), 251.
[77] Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont*, 7–8.
[78] Woodcock, 10–11.

Barkwell calls the family's official biography.[79] However, while Thompson provides information and stories that had previously been unavailable to the public and provides a more Métis centered view of Gabriel, the collection is limited—offering only snapshots of Gabriel's life. Thompson's extensive research, however, provides important information used within this dissertation, I have been careful however to use information in which Thompson provides citations for his source, including his interviews, or have noted the information as Thompson's analysis. Also, *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words*, written by Darren Préfontaine, reproduces the many ways in which Gabriel has been portrayed—in newspapers, art, and museums—as a coffee-table book. The book provides only a short biography on Gabriel however highlights how he has endured as a symbol for the Métis people over the past century.[80] Additionally, Préfontaine's book provides important insight into the archival information available on Gabriel Dumont, including newspaper accounts that are used within my research. These books validate the broad interest in Gabriel and his continued salience in the Métis historical consciousness; however, much of Gabriel's life remains unexamined.

This dissertation acknowledges the important work done by these scholars and, in moving beyond biography alone, I use Gabriel Dumont as a prism for Métis conceptions of identity, both historically and contemporarily. Collective Métis identity is built through the experiences of individuals who are linked through kinship, homelands, and culture, and contemporary Métis identity is linked to the past through historical consciousness.

THEORY

When I think of Gabriel, I think of my father and my grandfather and the family connections, you know, and the commitment.

Mz. D- Métis Research Partner[81]

Wahkootowin

This research's main theoretical framework is wahkootowin. Maria Campbell wrote,

> there is a word in my language that speaks to these issues: 'wahkotowin.' Today it is translated to mean kinship, relationship, and family as in human family. But at

[79] Thompson, *Red Sun*.
[80] Prefontaine, *Gabriel Dumont*.
[81] Mz. D, interview with Krystl Raven.

> one time, from our place it meant the whole of creation. And our teachings taught us that all of creation is related and inter-connected to all things within it. Wahkotowin meant honoring and respecting those relationships. They are our stories, songs, ceremonies, and dances that taught us from birth to death our responsibilities and reciprocal obligations to each other. Human to human, human to plants, human to animals, to the water and especially to the earth. And in turn all of creation had responsibilities and reciprocal obligations to us.[82]

Wahkootowin has been used as a theoretical lens in Métis studies since Brenda Macdougall's (2010) foundational work that applied the concept to the exploration of the development of the Sakitawak community.[83] Macdougall argues that this principle influenced the community's choices and ways of relating to one another, helping to establish Métis community and identity.[84] Wahkootowin is an "inclusive, holistic philosophy, predicated upon real stricture—being a good relative—which required adherence to the values, protocols, and behaviours expected of family members."[85] Thus, wahkootowin represents more than a relationship; it is a worldview based on familial connectedness that places the community above the individual, a concept central to being Métis.[86] This understanding of relationships was inherited from First Nations families as part of the Métis worldview, and it directed the behaviour and actions of the Métis people. Since then, wahkootowin has been used in scholarship to demonstrate the importance of the concept in the Métis worldview building a deeper and broader understanding of its role. Michel Hogue's *Metis and the Medicine Line: Creating a Border and Dividing a People* (2015) refers to wahkootowin as a belief system that aided Métis peoples' ability to adapt to changes in their world, negotiate tensions within and between communities and nations, while not reducing their political

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[82] Maria Campbell, "We Need to Return to the Principles of Wahkotowin," *Eagle Feather News*, November 2007.
[83] Macdougall, *One of the Family*. Wahkootowin is used here to represent several Indigenous terms for this worldview and does not exist in the Métis language: Michif. However, similar terms do: miyeu wiichayhtoowuk (relationship), ni wahkoomow (relative), and waahkoomiwayhk (kinship).
[84] Macdougall.
[85] Macdougall, *One of the Family,* 83.
[86] Macdougall, *One of the Family,* 8; Jennifer Adese, "The New People: Reading for Peoplehood in Métis Literatures," *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 28, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 69.

autonomy.[87] Similarly, Adam Gaudry's (2014) work has also underscored the way wahkootowin relates with political autonomy (kaa-tipeyimishoyaahk- defined as to own or govern themselves), arguing that the Métis culture balanced these two concepts, a strong feeling of belonging of relatedness and Métis collectiveness while allowing kaa-tipeyimishoyaahk to influence their relationships with other peoples. He situates concepts as historically foundational to Métis governance. Gaudry's establishing of historical Métis governance as influenced by wahkootowin leads to discussion of how the past can inform contemporary Métis governance and inter-nation relationships.[88] Gaudry continues to use the theoretical concept of wahkootowin in his 2018 article regarding Métis identity. Arguing that because of wahkootowin, being Métis is not just a "'relationship to ancestry' but also a 'responsibility to reciprocity' that involves reciprocal relationships" to contemporary Métis communities that hold historical-contemporary continuity.[89] Together Hogue and Gaudry's work demonstrates the importance of the wahkootowin within Métis identity and political actions historically and contemporarily.

More recently, Peter Fortna (2022) explored the Conklin Métis community's history through the lens of wahkootowin. This history, he argues, encompasses a "long-term struggle to protect their wahkootowin for the generations past, present, and future" against the pressures and effects of colonialism.[90] Zoe Todd (2020)—whose work often focuses on Métis relationships with relatives human and not—explores her family matriarch's past actions. She articulates how the lens of wahkootowin reveals that the actions of her ancestor were political actions that honoured human and non-human relations.[91] Together, this sampling of scholarship has brought nuance to our understanding of wahkootowin in the Métis context, demonstrating how it can

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[87] Michel Hogue, *Metis and the Medicine Line: Creating a Border and Dividing a People* (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2015).
[88] Adam Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves': A Political History of Métis Self-Determination in the North-West, 1830-1870" (Dissertation, Victoria, University of Victoria, 2014).
[89] Adam Gaudry, "Communing with the Dead: The 'New Métis,' Métis Identity Appropriation, and the Displacement of Living Métis Culture," *The American Indian Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (Spring 2018), 168.
[90] Peter Fortna, "Wahkotowin, Keemooch, and Home: A History of the Conklin Métis Community, 1886–2020 1," *Prairie History*, no. 8 (Summer 2022), 55.
[91] Zoe Todd, "Honouring Our Great-Grandmothers: An Ode to Caroline LaFramboise, Twentieth-Century Métis Matriarch," in *In Good Relation: History, Gender, and Kinship in Indigenous Feminisms*, ed. Sarah Nickel and Amanda Fehr (University of Manitoba Press, 2020), 171–81.

reveal more than kinship. Wahkootowin as a theoretical lens can also demonstrate the motivations behind political actions on both individual and community levels that balance the needs of kinship responsibilities with the political autonomy of being Métis. My research uses wahkootowin to reveal how their decisions were shaped by their understanding of kinship responsibility and how the Dumont family's political and leadership actions were grounded in responsibility to community and family.

Indigenous Masculinity Theories

Gabriel's life story is shaped through gender, influenced by his own experiences and conceptions of Métis masculinity as well as by others' perceptions of him. As such, this dissertation acknowledges that gender affected Gabriel's life experiences. Additionally, as Macdougall's work highlights the importance of Métis women regarding kinship, my dissertation uses the lens of Indigenous masculinities to demonstrate how gender intersects with wahkootowin, influencing the way kinship responsibility is experienced, understood, and expressed. To begin, the theories discussed below and this dissertation address gender as a binary, I recognize that the gender binary is part of the heteropatriarchal norms imposed through settler colonialism on Indigenous peoples, and my use of masculinities analysis is not meant to naturalize this binary.[92] Emma LaRoque describes the complexities of gender analysis and the

[92] A sample of suggested readings on the problematic nature of the gender binary includes Lauren Abruzzo, "Decolonizing Genderqueer: An Inquiry into the Gender Binary, Resistance, and Imperialistic Social Categories" (Ph.D., New York, N.Y, City University of New York, 2022), https://www.proquest.com/openview/61e0f4051270383d7867dd41e3f12b48/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y; Qwo-Li Driskill et al., eds., *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature*, 3rd edition (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2011); Margaret Robinson, "Two-Spirit Identity in a Time of Gender Fluidity," *Journal of Homosexuality* 67, no. 12 (October 14, 2020): 1675–90, https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2019.1613853; Shelbi Nahwilet Meissner Whyte Kyle, "Theorizing Indigeneity, Gender, and Settler Colonialism," in *The Routledge Companion to the Philosophy of Race* (Routledge, 2017); Freya Schiwy, "Decolonization and the Question of Subjectivity," *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2–3 (March 1, 2007): 271–94, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162555; Sarah Hunt, "Embodying Self-Determination: Beyond the Gender Binary," in *Determinants of Indigenous Peoples' Health, Second Edition: Beyond the Social*, ed. Margo Greenwood, Sarah de Leeuw, and Nicole Marie Lindsay (Canadian Scholars, 2018), 22–39; Joanne Barker, *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies* (Duke University Press, 2017), http://read.dukeupress.edu/books/book/2320/Critically-SovereignIndigenous-Gender-Sexuality.A sample of suggested readings on the problematic nature of the gender binary includes Abruzzo, "Decolonizing Genderqueer."

binary that often positions the traditional feminine as sacred with the women's realm as domestic, often further reinforcing unequal gendered distributions of power.[93] She also cautions that conversations of traditional gendered roles can be problematic as it can limit tolerance for difference and individuality while excluding those who do not fall into the gender binary. LaRoque cautions that this romanticized version of traditional gendered roles and characteristics are perhaps more influenced by colonial heteropatriarchal standards than some realize.[94] With these complexities in mind, I build on the works of scholars such as Robert Innes, Kim Anderson, John Swift, and Brendan Hokowhitu, to use Indigenous masculinities theories to better understand Gabriel's life story, how it was shaped and perceived, and as an example of Métis masculinity.[95] Indigenous masculinity scholarship responds and adds to the work being undertaken by Indigenous feminist, gender, and queer researchers, examining how race and gender bias affect Indigenous men and those who assert a male Indigenous identity. It does this through an exploration of why and how Indigenous men exhibit their masculinity and the consequences that may bring, acknowledging the role of colonialism on gender.[96] The first theory

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[93] Emma LaRoque, "Metis and Feminist: Contemplations on Feminism, Human Rights, Culture and Decolonization," in *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism, 2nd Edition*, ed. Joyce Green (Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2020), 177.

[94] LaRoque, "Metis and Feminist: Contemplations on Feminism, Human Rights, Culture and Decolonization."

[95] Brendan Hokowhitu, "Producing Elite Indigenous Masculinities," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 23–48, https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2012.10648840; Kim Anderson, Robert Alexander Innes, and John Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities: Carrying the Bones of the Ancestors," in *Canadian Men and Masculinities: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Wayne Martino and Christopher J. Greig (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2012), 266–84; Robert Alexander Innes, and Kim Anderson, *Indigenous Men and Masculinities* (Winnipeg, Canada: University of Manitoba Press, 2015).

[96] Bob Antone, "Reconstructing Indigenous Masculine Thought," in *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*, ed. Robert Alexander Innes and Kim Anderson, (Winnipeg, Canada: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 21–37,; The following works provide a good overview of the scholarship in both Indigenous Studies and history: Leah Sneider, "Complementary Relationships: A Review of Indigenous Gender Studies," in *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*, ed. Robert Alexander Innes and Kim Anderson (Winnipeg, CANADA: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 62–79; Qwo-Li Driskill, ed., *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011); Hannah McCann and Whitney Monaghan, *Queer Theory Now: From Foundations to Futures*, 1st ed. 2020 edition (Red Globe

I draw from is from Anderson, Innes, and Swift, who discuss three particular themes their research uncovered in their search for healthy Indigenous masculinities: protection, provision, and mentoring.[97] Importantly, their research also linked masculinities and these themes to wahkootowin, noting several Elders spoke of good relations (wahkootowin) as necessary for the survival of their people along with the need for balance and respect between genders.[98] Protection referred to Indigenous men's traditional gendered role and responsibility in relation to keeping their communities, territories, and cosmologies safe. Protection went beyond the 'Indigenous warrior' role that colonial agents perceived protection to represent, and included in ceremonies and teachings.[99] Anderson, Innes, and Swift denote that provision was a gender role that did not infer men were the only community members who provided for their family and community, but rather that protocols and practices in connection to the procurement of resources embedded provision responsibility into Indigenous men's identity.[100] Lastly, their research revealed the theme of mentoring, older men influencing younger men for a healthy male identity, in which the responsibility to one's family was modeled in a positive way.[101] These traditional aspects were removed or altered with the introduction of patriarchy to Indigenous societies.[102] Anderson, Innes, and Swift emphasize that while gender roles existed before contact and the introduction of heteropatriarchy, traditional societies did not include a male dominance.[103] Like Anderson, Innes, and Swift, I highlight these themes and their relation to wahkootowin throughout Gabriel's life as explored in this dissertation.

Furthermore, as a post-contact Indigenous group, explorations of Métis masculinity cannot disregard the influence of their Euro-Canadian forefathers and their interactions with

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Press, 2019); Sarah Nickel and Amanda Fehr, eds., *In Good Relation: History, Gender, and Kinship in Indigenous Feminisms* (University of Manitoba Press, 2020); and Donna R. Gabaccia and Mary Jo Maynes, "Introduction: Gender History Across Epistemologies," in *Gender History Across Epistemologies* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2013),1–19, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118508206.ch0.

[97] Anderson, Innes, and Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities," 266–84.

[98] The Elders in this research appear to be conceptualizing gender as a binary. Anderson, Innes, and Swift.

[99] Anderson, Innes, and Swift, 275-277.

[100] Anderson, Innes, and Swift, 272.

[101] Anderson, Innes, and Swift, 278-279.

[102] Anderson, Innes, and Swift, 268.

[103] Anderson, Innes, and Swift, 269.

colonial agents, for which I turn to Hokowhitu's analysis of elite Indigenous masculinity. Hokowhitu asserts that elite Indigenous masculinity is a specific mode developed through contact with colonialism that mimics settler/colonial masculinities, eventually internalizing them.[104] It allowed the creation of a type of Indigenous masculinity that could dialogue with the developing colonial state, but in doing so it adopted heteronormative patriarchy in which Indigenous men then became the oppressor to Indigenous women.[105] Hokowhitu's later discussions assert that Indigenous masculinities incorporated heteropatriarchy in a way that reconfigured family and community structure. This restructuring included male "'ownership' over land, women, and children" and a paternalism in which the Indigenous man could consider himself a good father if he provided for his family but was emotionally absent.[106] Together, these understandings of Indigenous masculinities acknowledge change due to contact with colonialism, and the need to understand that process to decolonize Indigenous masculinity within contemporary society. Indigenous masculinities is an area of study in which there is space for further critique and expansion. The large variety of Indigenous cultures and ways of life, means that while some experiences (colonialism) are shared across Indigenous nations, there is substantial room to explore how masculinity was understood and expressed in different cultures and regions of the world, including beyond the gender binary. Anderson, Innes, and Swift's work brings together Elders from the same territory as the Métis people to locate understandings of traditional masculinity. However, they do not analyze historical records to find additional verification or expressions of the themes they reveal, as seen in this dissertation. Also, Hokowhitu's regional focus highlights the similarities of the effects of colonialism felt by many Indigenous peoples globally but does not directly address the North American Indigenous or Métis experience. By incorporating Hokowhitu's analysis this dissertation demonstrates how it can reveal nuances and further understanding of Indigenous masculinities in the Métis context.

As such, I propose that as post-contact Indigenous people, the Métis people emerged as a culture that was influenced by and integrated colonial ways of knowing into their culture, including gender roles. However, in the nineteenth century, Métis masculinity was not a

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[104] Hokowhitu, "Producing Elite Indigenous Masculinities."
[105] Hokowhitu.
[106] Brendan Hokowhitu, "Taxonomies of Indigeneity: Indigenous Heterosexual Patriarchal Masculinity," in *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*, ed. Robert Alexander Innes and Kim Anderson (Winnipeg, CANADA: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 89.

hegemonic masculinity in which women were fully subordinate to men and excluded from all traditional activities.[107] While Métis society did exclude women from some areas of power that were deemed male, including elected leadership, gender roles were seen as complementary and equally important. The result was gender roles in which Métis society privileged men in some respects, especially those that interacted with the colonial state, but did not see Métis men oppressing Métis women as seen in hegemonic masculinity. Therefore, I aim to uncover some of the complexities of nineteenth-century Métis masculinity in this research, because as Bob Antone states, "understanding how history contributes to masculine identity is vital to un-covering the decolonized Indigenous man."[108] I do so by weaving together these theories of Indigenous masculinities with wahkootowin to seek answers to questions including, how did certain Métis men such as Gabriel exhibit their masculinities in ways that responded to the expectations and stereotypes of others? How did wahkootowin influence Métis masculinities? What do contemporary understandings of Gabriel Dumont reveal about Métis masculinities? While these theoretical frameworks guide the data analysis, I combine several methodologies in my research process.

METHODOLOGY

This project weaves together several different methodologies to gain access to the data that allows Gabriel Dumont's life to be a lens into Métis identity both historically and contemporarily. As many Métis people recognize Gabriel to be a hero and important historical figure, his life has connections to contemporary Métis identity in a way not all past lives do. Therefore, I combine Indigenous Studies methodologies and new biography to access and analyze archival and oral histories to explore how Gabriel's life can act as a lens into Métis identity, including Métis masculinities, in both the past and contemporary times. I also participated in community service learning to build relationships with Métis communities and people and to further build my knowledge and understanding of Métis perspectives to inform my research. Indigenous Studies methodologies are used to bring a decolonizing approach to my research, and to approach my work in the most ethical manner possible. New biography methods allow the analysis and dissemination of data gathered to provide a biography of Gabriel Dumont

[107] Hokowhitu, 86.
[108] Antone, "Reconstructing Indigenous Masculine Thought," 32.

that goes beyond his life story to also informing on broader themes of Métis identity. Combined these methodologies informed the gathering of data through archives and interviews with my research partners, allowing this dissertation to move beyond the past and link Gabriel Dumont's life to the present.

Indigenous Studies Methodologies

This project is situated within Indigenous Studies methodologies. Indigenous Studies scholar Robert Alexander Innes discusses how Indigenous Studies research must be held to a high ethical standard, especially in terms of accountability to the research group and Indigenous community.[109] Furthermore, Innes argues that Indigenous Studies methodologies have "substance, ethics, accountability, and produce results for Native peoples."[110] As such, this project incorporates Métis community members as research partners rather than research subjects. Over the past few years, I have established meaningful and enduring relationships within the Métis community. As an Indigenous Studies scholar, my research is influenced by these relationships, and my goal has been to produce a dissertation that is beneficial to the Métis community, following the ethical and methodological standards of Indigenous Studies.

While discussions on the methodologies used within Indigenous Studies are somewhat limited, several scholars have offered useful insights that are applicable to my work. Chris Andersen and Jean O'Brien insist that Indigenous Studies methodologies are "not necessarily the same thing as Indigenous knowledge,"[111] which is an important differentiation.[112] As a non-

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[109] Linda Tuhiwai Smith discusses the long history of researchers using Indigenous peoples as research subjects and appeals for a shift toward community partnerships. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd ed. (London: Zed Books, 2012).

[110] Robert Alexander Innes, "American Indian Studies Research Is Ethical Research: A Discussion of Linda Smith and James Waldram's Approach to Aboriginal Research," *Native Studies Review* 15, no. 2 (2004): 136–37.

[111] Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien, eds., *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies* (London; New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

[112] "Traditional Indigenous knowledge can be defined as a network of knowledges, beliefs, and traditions intended to preserve, communicate, and contextualize Indigenous relationships with culture and landscape over time. One might distinguish 'knowledge' as factual data, 'belief' as religious concepts, and 'tradition' as practice, but these terms are often used imprecisely and interchangeably to describe Indigenous epistemologies Margaret Bruchac, "Indigenous

Indigenous scholar in Indigenous Studies, I do not claim to possess or produce Indigenous knowledge; instead, I use Indigenous Studies methodologies to convey Métis perspectives to the best of my abilities. I follow Robert Innes' three goals for Indigenous Studies:

1. To access, understand, and convey Indigenous cultural perspective(s).
2. To conduct research that benefits Indigenous people and/or communities.
3. To employ research methods and theories that will achieve these goals.[113]

Furthermore, Innes states that beneficial research exists in many forms, including "providing a community's history from its perspective in print for the first time."[114] Indigenous Studies is both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, and, therefore, the research methodologies should be determined by the research questions of each project. According to Innes, the relevant methodologies are chosen to facilitate the ethical collection of data.[115] Therefore, this project uses Indigenous Studies methodologies to prioritize ethical research practices, build relationships with the Métis community members, and centre the Métis perspective through data gathering, analysis and dissemination.

Community Service Learning

I understand that this work is simply one step in creating a long and meaningful relationship with the Métis community. As a settler person I knew it would be important to not do this work outside the Métis community and that relationship building was necessary. While my Master's thesis provided me the opportunity to meet and discuss my research with several Métis academics, I understood the limitations I faced as a settler person. As I did not yet have the resources to develop a community led project for my dissertation, I worked to build relationships with the Métis people through community service learning.[116] I am thankful to the groups that

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Knowledge and Traditional Knowledge," *Encyclopedia of Global Archaeology*, January 1, 2014, 3814.

[113] Robert Innes, "Introduction: Native Studies and Native Cultural Preservation, Revitalization, and Persistence," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 34, no. 2 (January 1, 2010), 2.

[114] Innes, 4.

[115] Innes, 6.

[116] Community service learning is experiential learning within a community allowing a person to gain cultural understanding and community engagement skills, while also providing service to that community in a volunteer capacity. Nancy Van Styvendale, Jessica McDonald, and Sarah Buhler, "Community Service-Learning in Canada: Emerging Conversations," *Engaged Scholar*

have welcomed me and to those who have become my friends. Most importantly, this community service learning has informed my research. For three years, I took Michif classes with Bruce Flamont and Josh Morin. I also was part of a Michif practice group led by Dr. Laura Forsythe through the summer of 2022. I believe that learning Michif is not simply another skill, but rather that it teaches one about Métis life and worldviews. Through this dissertation you will see Michif words used. I have done this to situate the Métis worldview as the guiding principle of this dissertation, to highlight the importance of language in Indigenous cultures, and to honour the language knowledge that has been shared with me. I am especially thankful to Bruce Flamont who aided me with the translations to ensure the Michif is correct.

Moreover, I have participated in many beading lessons hosted by Gabriel Dumont Local 11 and His Bead Store. These lessons, along with the Michif language classes, have introduced me to several inspirational Métis women, and the hours spent talking, beading, and learning have been wonderful. Since December 2019, I have collaborated with several Métis women to help Bruce Flamont build a website to share his knowledge regarding Métis history and language. Although the COVID-19 restrictions impeded this project, we have successfully launched the website (thinkinginmichif.com) and continue to add articles and videos. In 2019, I spent several days at Batoche as a volunteer for the final "Walking with Our Sisters" installation. This was an emotional experience for me, as each vamp that we handled had a unique history, and I was able to listen and learn from the Indigenous women involved in the project.

In the fall of 2021, I was invited by St. Albert community members to volunteer on an advisory board for a project with Parks Canada. From October 2021 to June 2022 the advisory group met monthly and celebrated in person the launching of the project at the St. Albert Riverlots. The travelling exhibit details the relationship between Métis people and the buffalo and has since travelled to several events and locations. The advisory council allowed me to meet several St. Albert Métis community members and elders, listen and learn, and in return provide my skills in research when needed. The council continues to keep in touch and provide input on future opportunities for the exhibit. These learning opportunities and relationships have provided me with insight into Métis worldviews, the opportunity to listen to Métis knowledge, and to

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Journal: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching, and Learning 4, no. 1 (May 28, 2018): i–xiii, https://doi.org/10.15402/esj.v4i1.303; Leo Ebersole, "What Is Service Learning? And How Do Students Benefit From It?," *Elmhurst University* (blog), November 25, 2019, https://www.elmhurst.edu/blog/what-is-service-learning/.

develop relationships that have guided and influenced my research and interpretations of evidence.

This dissertation is a step towards being in a position that will allow me to create, as Winona Wheeler describes, research that could "begin at the community and end in the archives."[117] I understand that my positionality as a settler scholar lends a different worldview and understanding to the study of Indigenous communities and subjects; however, while this positions me as an outsider[118] to the Métis community, I believe that through the development of relationships and "training, motivation, sensitivity, knowledge, and study,"[119] a settler scholar can produce a sensitive historical and cultural understanding of Indigenous communities and subjects.[120] As a settler scholar, I recognize that I cannot offer experiences I have not had, but I can learn to listen to Indigenous realities and worldviews and centre Indigenous voices to produce research that counters Western research paradigms.[121] While this community service learning does not directly bring sources that are used in this dissertation, it has informed my understanding of the sources.

New Biography

In addition to using Indigenous Studies methodologies, this research uses new biography methodology. New biography emerged in the twentieth century as a critique of the Victorian biographies that lent themselves to amassing the details of a 'great man's' life. Interestingly, the shift from the Victorian biography occurred through the development of new theories and practices across "national boundaries and in which common biographical tenets were developed at the same historical moment in the work of writers between whom there was little, if any actual

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[117] Stevenson, Winona Stevenson, "Narrative Wisps of the Ochekwi Sipi Past: A Journey in Recovering Collective Memories," *Oral History Forum* 19–20 (2000): 122.

[118] Robert Alexander Innes, "'Wait a Second. Who Are You Anyways?' The Insider/Outsider Debate and American Indian Studies," *American Indian Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (2009): 440–61.

[119] Duane Champagne, "American Indian Studies Is For Everyone," in *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians*, ed. Devon A Mihesuah (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 181.

[120] Innes writes that a person who is not raised in a Native culture (Native or non-Native) can overcome biases in conveying the Indigenous perspective by learning about the culture and developing the skill of interpreting the cultural perspective. Innes, "Introduction."

[121] Nado Aveling, "'Don't Talk about What You Don't Know': On (Not) Conducting Research with/in Indigenous Contexts," *Critical Studies in Education* 54, no. 2 (June 1, 2013): 203–14, https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2012.724021, 210.

contact," including Lytton Strachey, André Maurois, Emil Ludwig, Gamaliel Bradford, and A.J.A. Symons.[122] Lytton Strachey argued that biographers need to carefully select, analyze, and interpret the evidence of a person's life, while aiming to provide the facts as the biographer understand them, even if that results in being not complementary.[123] Laura Marcus described these new biography characteristics as new equality between biographer and subject, unlike the hero-worship seen in Victorian biographies; brevity, selection, and a form traditionally associated more with fiction than history; discovery of central motifs or key aspects of a person that help provide example of or explain the whole; a focus on character not events; and lastly anti-chronological.[124] Because of the focus on brevity, the new biography does not aim to provide a complete view of a person's life.[125] New biography, because of its analytical approach, is also often influenced by "feminists, postmodernists, and race theorists," and takes historical biography from a historical approach to an interdisciplinary genre.[126] Additionally, because of this analysis new biography allows the biographers' "ideas, insights and judgements" to position the biographer as equal to the subject who is then "interrogated, analyzed and subjected to independent critical judgement."[127] New biography studies not just the construction of identities, but the nature of inventing selves, seeking to understand how people assume their identity in relation to others, linking ethnography and biography, bringing the individual to the collective experiences as focused on by social historians.[128] This approach to biography is "rooted in ideas and events larger than the individual subject,"[129] allowing a specific life to be understood within

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[122] Laura Marcus, "The Newness of the 'New Biography,'" in *Mapping Lives: The Uses of Biography*, ed. Peter France and William St. Clair, British Academy Centenary Monographs (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2002), 194.
[123] Barbara Caine, *Biography and History*, Theory and History (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 39.
[124] Marcus, "The Newness of the 'New Biography,'" 195–96.
[125] Marcus, 197.
[126] Birgitte Possing, "Biography: Historical," n.d., https://www.possing.dk/pdf/historicalbio.pdf, 7.
[127] Caine, *Biography and History*, 39.
[128] Jo Burr Margadant, *The New Biography: Performing Femininity in Nineteenth-Century France*, Studies on the History of Society and Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 3-4; Nick Salvatore, "Biography and Social History: An Intimate Relationship," *Labour History*, no. 87 (November 1, 2004): 187–92, https://doi.org/10.2307/27516005, 189.
[129] Salvatore, "Biography and Social History," 189.

its social context, thus illustrating the process of historical change through the individual.[130] Furthermore, Corrine Glesne insists that biography challenges the disembodiment of data by connecting it to a particular lived experience. Rather than focusing on the cultural systems themselves, a biographer concentrates on an individual to illustrate those cultural systems and provide greater insight into them.[131] New biography, then, reveals the universal through the particular, enabling the writer to narrow a period or subject down to a manageable scale that the reader can more easily comprehend.

Several historians have commented on the position of new biography within the Canadian historical narrative, particularly in relation to the discipline's social turn. Adele Perry and Brian Lewis remarked that while biographies had for some time felt old fashioned, appealing to non-academic authors and public audiences, they have gained renewed interest with a shift to the focusing on the individual and agency, creating an entry-point to the study of a broader world.[132] Later, Perry challenged historians to go beyond simple biographies to find more nuanced ways of engaging with individual lives, moving away from the outdated chronological approach and stories of great (white) men.[133] Stephanie Anderson argued that social movements influenced Canadian historical narratives away from nationalist and biographical approaches to a meta-narrative that still embraced progress and success but included rather than excluded the histories of Indigenous and ethno-cultural minorities.[134] Whitney P. Lackenbaur and Greg Donaghy further note that the change in the Canadian historical narrative has allowed new biography to find its place as "historians increasingly blend careful archival research and methodological analysis of secondary sources with oral histories and other sources to weave together political and cultural

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[130] Salvatore, 190.

[131] Corrine E. Glesne, "Ethnography with a Biographic Eye," in *Writing Educational Biography: Explorations in Qualitative Research*, ed. Craig Alan Kridel, Garland Reference Library of Social Science; Critical Education Practice, v. 1098. v. 13 (New York: Garland Pub, 1998), 34–39.

[132] Adele Perry and Brian Lewis, "Introductory Remarks: Special Issue on 'The Biographical (Re)Turn,'" *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 21, no. 2 (2010): 2, https://doi.org/10.7202/1003083ar.

[133] Adele Perry, "Beyond Biography, Beyond Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 98, no. 2 (June 2017): 321–37, https://doi.org/10.3138/chr.98.2.Perry.

[134] Stephanie Anderson, "The Stories Nations Tell: Sites of Pedagogy, Historical Consciousness, and National Narratives," *Canadian Journal of Education / Revue Canadienne de l'éducation* 40, no. 1 (2017): 19.

themes."[135] Charlotte Gray affirms this idea, noting that with the "growing interest in different kinds of history," biographies are not just possible but welcomed.[136] Gray furthers that the "micro-studies done by modern historians provide biographers with the kind of details essential to give the daily texture of [a] subject's life."[137] Additionally, new biography as a method allows the expansion of the Canadian historical narrative to include the stories of lives previously ignored.

New biography can be useful in Indigenous Studies as a decolonizing approach. While as I have established, new biography allows the individual to demonstrate broader narratives, biography can also elucidate the lives of those who do not conform to the dominant discourse.[138] Moreover, new biography methodology combined with Indigenous Studies methodology creates a decolonized history, as it centres Indigenous perspectives while connecting the individual to larger themes. Historian Doris Jeanne Mackinnon notes that "in the scholarship to date, one major aspect of Métis identity that remains largely unexamined is the question of the identity of Métis people on an individual basis."[139] A gap in which new biography can fill. Thus, using this methodology, this dissertation will reveal new information, not only of Gabriel's experience of Métis identity, but also of the wider Métis community's concepts of identity and how they embodied and portrayed that identity, historically and contemporarily.

Sources

This is a historical project that accesses Métis voices from both the nineteenth century and contemporary times. As such, this project relies on archival sources and interviews with nine Métis people. This combination of sources links the past to the present: highlighting Métis perspectives throughout.

Archives

Research for this dissertation included visiting several archives, as well as sources gathered during my Masters research. It should be noted that Indigenous Studies scholars often have a contentious relationship with archival research, as archival records are typically written

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[135] Whitney P. Lackenbaur and Greg Donaghy, eds., *People, Politics, and Purpose: Biography and Canadian Political History* (University of British Columbia Press, 2023), 12.
[136] Charlotte Gray, "The New Biography," *Queen's Quarterly* 108, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 255.
[137] Gray, 255.
[138] Roderick J. Barman, "Biography as History," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 21, no. 2 (May 10, 2011): 72, https://doi.org/10.7202/1003088ar.
[139] MacKinnon, *The Identities of Marie Rose Delorme Smith, 1861–1960*, 4.

from a non-Indigenous perspective and are therefore limited in what they can reveal of Indigenous realities.[140] However, this does not mean that archives should not be considered a valuable source of information. Many scholars have shown that archives can be read "against the grain" to access marginalized voices and perspectives.[141] Furthermore, I am conscious of the context in which these sources were created, and read them to counter the inherent biases and find information that centres the Métis perspective.[142] Acknowledging that colonial sources are often imbalanced, scholars have devised a variety of strategies for "finding, hearing and presenting the voices of the marginalized."[143] The colonial reliance on written records also allows for sources that can be read beyond the narrow interpretation of colonial society, revealing the complexities of both colonialists and the colonized.[144] For instance, Macdougall combines several methodological traditions in archiving, including the new social-history methods of genealogical reconstruction and microhistory, to privilege the Indigenous perspective in her

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[140] Jean O'Brien, "Historical Sources and Methods," in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, ed. Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien (London; New York: Routledge, 2016), 17-18.
[141] The approach of reading against the grain in archival documents is discussed and used by many social and feminist historians. Ann Stoler has refined this approach, which is inspired by the deconstructionist and post-structuralist tradition. Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009); Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance," *Archival Science* 2, no. 1–2 (March 2002): 87–109, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02435632; Elena Vezzadini, "Setting the Scene of the Crime: The Colonial Archive, History, and Racialisation of the 1924 Revolution in Anglo-Egyptian Sudan," *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines* 49, no. 1 (January 2, 2015): 67–93, https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2015.1014380.
[142] Barkwell and Préfontaine discuss the need for more sensitive and community-based studies incorporating the Métis perspective and departure from the trends of scholars such as Thomas Flanagan, who interprets sources through a colonial lens. Lawrence J. Barkwell and Darren R. Préfontaine, "Deconstructing Métis Historiography: Giving Voice to the Métis People," in *Resources for Métis Researchers* (Winnipeg: Saskatoon, Sask: Louis Riel Institute of the Manitoba Métis Federation; Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, 1999), 3–30; Patricia Kay Galloway, *Practicing Ethnohistory: Mining Archives, Hearing Testimony, Constructing Narrative* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).
[143] Jeannette Allis Bastian, "Reading Colonial Records Through an Archival Lens: The Provenance of Place, Space and Creation," *Archival Science* 6, no. 3–4 (August 2, 2007): 268 https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-006-9019-1.
[144] Bastian, "Reading Colonial Records Through an Archival Lens" 269.

work.[145] Furthermore, O'Brien reminds us that archives, though overwhelmingly colonial in construction and content, also contain documents written by Indigenous people.[146] Kristin Burnett exemplifies this through her use of both colonial archives as well as published and unpublished memoirs to contextualize Indigenous voices and perspectives in her work.[147] In a similar fashion, this project uses both Indigenous archival materials and Indigenous memoirs in addition to colonial archival materials, to emphasize sources that illuminate Métis perspectives.

I use sources from multiple archives, including the Société Historique de Saint-Boniface, Manitoba Provincial Archives, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Glenbow Archives, Saskatchewan Provincial Archives, Gabriel Dumont Institute, and Library and Archives Canada. These archives house British, Canadian, and Métis sources. Locating information on Métis individuals, including Gabriel Dumont presents some challenges and researchers are often required to compare sources to locate these individuals and weave together the story of their lives. Many of the sources consulted are colonial in nature. For example, at the Glenbow Archives, I consulted the Edgar Dewdney fonds, including Indian Department records related to the 1885 North West Resistance and Gabriel Dumont's following amnesty. The Richard C. Hardisty fonds contained collated Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) documents regarding the Métis population in the Saskatchewan district. At the Archives of Manitoba, I consulted the HBC Archives, including the Boulton family records, Assiniboia General Court, and Alexander Morris' records. Additionally, this archive contained one fonds regarding Gabriel Dumont that contained a single letter from Dumont, May 2, 1885, but unfortunately the first half of the letter is illegible due to damage to the document.[148] While these sources often only portray the government's concerns regarding Métis people, they provide useful context to the events in which they were created, and when used in combination with other sources other perspectives can be revealed.

The Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan contained several archives in relation to Gabriel Dumont. Most helpful was the file on Gabriel Dumont that curated documents of him from

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[145] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 10–13.
[146] Jean O'Brien, "Historical Sources and Methods," in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, ed. Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien (London; New York: Routledge, 2016), 18.
[147] Kristin Burnett, *Taking Medicine: Women's Healing Work and Colonial Contact in Southern Alberta, 1880-1930*, Women and Indigenous Studies Series (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).
[148] Gabriel Dumont, "Letter from Gabriel Dumont," May 2, 1885, Gabriel Dumont Fonds, Archives of Manitoba.

multiple sources, providing an excellent starting point for the research at this archive. Additionally, the Archival Resource Guide for Aboriginal Issues and Darren Prefontaine's book helped narrow down files to look at. I also accessed the Dominion Government fonds through this archive and the John A. MacDonald fonds. Community based fonds were also accessed for Batoche and St. Laurent de Grandin, and a number of newspaper archives. While these archives are primarily colonial in structure and sources, important information is found that helps trace the movements and actions of Métis people including the Dumont family.

The Historique de Saint-Boniface, Gabriel Dumont Institute, and Glenbow Archives house substantial archives regarding Métis people. The Gabriel Dumont Institute houses the Dennis and Jean Fisher Collection, biographical and community information, and Métis oral histories all of which are utilized within this research. Unfortunately, due to Covid closures I was not able to visit these archives in person but made use of their excellent digital resources.

The Glenbow Archives contain several genealogical researcher's records used in this dissertation, including Gail Morin, Charles Denney, and Geoff Burtonshaw's collections that include curated genealogies. These records were essential for providing Dumont family genealogy and are used in this dissertation to trace marriage and family patterns. As Métis historian Cheryl Troupe notes "genealogies provide a framework for examining change in Métis family and community social and political structures and the movement of families over time and space."[149] These genealogies provide benefits and challenges. Like any historical source, genealogies must be analyzed by the researcher and their reliability checked. Using more than one genealogist's work, in addition to other sources, helped verify information. At times, it also highlighted the ways in which conflicting information is provided. In these instances, I provide my justifications for which data I use in this dissertation. For example, sources record Veronique Dumont's marriage date as both 1886 and 1888. Through comparing the different genealogists' work with other sources (including census), I determined 1886 to be the most likely date and provide my reasoning for that decision. However, while I note my choice of date and why, dates are often given as a temporal signpost more so than as hard fact (and noted as such), and the analysis is focused on the relationship and actions taken between the Dumont family members. Genealogies of Métis families are not always a straightforward process, as not all births and

[149] Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories," 49.

marriages are recorded in church and government records, especially during the times of the first generations of the Dumont family in the Northwest.

Transcribed, translated, and original documents are used in this dissertation. At times this is because the transcription is the only copy of the source available, at others it is because the translation/transcription is more accessible for readers. The Provincial Archives of Alberta holds the Oblates archives, which provided the original parish journal from Father André giving first-hand accounts of events that took place in St. Laurent de Grandin. The Historique de Saint-Boniface allowed access to the original copy of Gabriel Dumont's memoir. Through this dissertation I cite the translation of Gabriel Dumont's memoir by Denis Combet and Lise Gaboury-Diallo (2006) rather than the original memoir, and the transcribed version of the parish journal. Comparisons were made to the original to check, to my best ability, the accuracy of the translations and transcriptions. For Gabriel's memoir, this published translation is considered a more accurate translation, with no structural changes made from the original, in comparison to the earlier published translation by Michael Barnholden that is often cited by researchers.[150]

Additionally, memoirs like any source need to be read with a critical eye. It is important to understand that the histories a person tells of themselves are curated versions of their life. Acknowledging who transcribed the memoirs, the intended audience, and if possible, the purpose behind the memoir is important to interpreting the information within. However, memoirs provide incredible sources of information from the person themselves. As Jennifer Jensen Wallach notes, analysis is required of any historical witness's testimony no matter the form it takes, and memoirs "offer a window into how different individuals interpret their histories or, in many instances, how they would like their readers to remember the past."[151] The form of the memoir's creation must be considered. For example, Gabriel Dumont's memoirs were based on his oral testimonies to a group audience. As such, this version of his memoir in many ways this can align more with oral histories, as he did not himself write these accounts, spending time over months and years crafting the written version. A written version can allow the greater ability for a

[150] Gabriel Dumont, *Gabriel Dumont Speaks*, trans. Michael Dorn Barnholden, Rev. 2nd ed.. (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2009); Payment points out issues with this version Diane Payment, "Michael Barnholden, Gabriel Dumont Speaks," *Manitoba History*, no. 26 (Autumn 1993).
[151] Jennifer Jensen Wallach, "Remembering Jim Crow: The Literary Memoir as Historical Source Material - ProQuest" (University of Massachusetts, 2004), 88.

person to weave in less accurate versions of the past to suit their goals.[152] While memoirs contain bias, they allow first-hand accounts of events, and provide a Métis perspective often missing within the archival records making them an important source for this dissertation. Additionally, as Diane Payment notes, Gabriel's memoir provides insight into his personality "his sense of humour is also in evidence as he comments that after Riel and some of the men returned to Batoche while they were en route to Fish Creek, "on ne disait plus le chapelet, et on avancait plus vite" (we weren't saying the rosary, so we were able to advance more quickly)."[153] Lastly, memories often challenge the official history bringing forward the voices of marginalized groups.[154]

Altogether, this dissertation uses archival information from multiple archives, colonial and Métis centred. I have approached the analysis of this information through a critical eye that reads against the grain and combines multiple sources to try to access a Métis perspective of the events discussed through this dissertation.

Interviews

In addition to archival research, this dissertation incorporates information from interviews with my Métis research partners.[155] As Winona Wheeler notes, Indigenous and other scholars have long emphasized the importance of oral history in the research, writing, and teaching of Indigenous histories.[156] Incorporating interviews allowed me to build relationships with Métis participants and to further incorporate Métis interpretations of the past and present into this work. The interviews gave access to how some Métis people understand Gabriel's place within the Métis Nation and his role in Métis historical consciousness an important part of Métis identity. I

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[152] Wallach, "Remembering Jim Crow," 89.
[153] Payment, "Gabriel Dumont Speaks."
[154] Wallach, "Remembering Jim Crow," 94; Payment, "Gabriel Dumont Speaks."
[155] Mary-Ellen Kelm discusses her positionality as a settler scholar, her work with and learning from First Nations Elders, and her aim to include Indigenous voices to counter any appearance of speaking for Indigenous people, while acknowledging the analysis as her own. Mary-Ellen Kelm, *Colonizing Bodies: Aboriginal Health and Healing in British Columbia, 1900-50*, 1st pbk. ed.. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1996).
[156] Winona Wheeler, "Reflections on the Social Relations of Indigenous Oral Histories," in *Walking a Tightrope Aboriginal People and Their Representations*, ed. Ute Lischke and David McNab (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), 194.

refer to them as research partners to signal the position and knowledge contributions of those I interviewed.

Recruitment for participants began after ethics was obtained in fall of 2019. A poster was distributed across Canada via social media and sent to Métis locals and provincial organizations. The recruitment poster requested volunteers who were Métis descendants of the Dumont family[157] or whose family considered Gabriel Dumont an important aspect of their history. In doing so, this study employed purposive and snowball sampling.[158] The hope was that the interviews would access a more family centered understanding of Gabriel. In the following months I discussed the project with almost fifty Métis individuals who responded. Twenty-one individuals expressed further interest, pre-interview communications were held, and nine individuals agreed to be interviewed with eleven potential participants declining to participate. The participants included four who identified as female, five as male, and ranged in age from young adults to senior citizens. Of the nine, seven are descendants of the Dumont family and the other two, while not directly related, held an interest in Gabriel as their family histories were closely connected to the 1885 North West Resistance. Each participant was given the opportunity to be identified by name or pseudonym in this dissertation. All my research partners felt it was important for them to participate in the project, and in several cases had been encouraged by their families to do so. Each communicated their relationship to Gabriel clearly. Allysa Woodrow emphasized that she learned about Gabriel through her grandmother who passed on her great-grandmother's knowledge stories. This relative knew Gabriel well, and was with him at the time of his death.[159] Terry Laroque and Trevor Cameron are descendants of Gabriel's brother, Isadore Dumont.[160] Curtis DuMont's grandfather, Frank DuMont, was the son of a woman that was raised by Gabriel. Curtis remarked that his family was more disconnected from their Métis heritage, his grandfather identifying as French publicly. However, his father and uncles embraced

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[157] Discussions held in the pre-interview stage asked how they were related to Gabriel Dumont or in what ways their family was connected to him historically. At that time some participants felt they did not fit the requirements and excluded themselves from the project.
[158] Carla Pascoe Leahy, "Selection and Sampling Methodologies in Oral Histories of Mothering, Parenting and Family," *Oral History* 47, no. 1 (2019): Leahy provides a good overview of the sampling techniques used by Oral Historians and the differences in comparison to the sampling aims of the Social Sciences.
[159] Allysa Woodrow, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, December 2, 2019.
[160] Terry Laroque, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, December 6, 2019; Trevor Cameron, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, January 24, 2020.

their Métis heritage.[161] Jeannine Christopherson Dumont is connected to the Dumont family through her father. Her grandfather was the illegitimate son of Gabriel's adopted son. Her father was named Gabriel Dumont and was raised in St. Laurent by his grandparents. Jeannine's mother is a Laframboise bringing another connection to the extended Dumont family.[162] Kirsten Der Velden is not Métis by birth but was adopted into a Métis family that is connected to the Dumonts, the original safekeepers of Gabriel Dumont's items that are now in the Duck Lake Museum.[163] Mz. D is a Dumont; however, her relatives took treaty rather than scrip. She is not as clear about her connection to Gabriel's family but understood it to be several generations back.[164] So while Mz D does not hold Métis citizenship, her and her family identify with their Métis heritage and identity. Lastly, two participants' families passed on knowledge of Gabriel's life while not members of the Dumont family. Jonas Weselake-George is of the McKay family, and he grew up with stories of his family's involvement in the 1885 North West Resistance.[165] Bruce Flamont is also not related to the Dumont family but held family knowledge of the Resistance and of Gabriel Dumont. Family stories explain that Gabriel would visit Bruce's family when travelling between the Batoche and Red River regions.[166] Together, these research partners highlight how, despite their diversity of life experiences, they understand the ways in which their Métis identity is influenced through their knowledge of the past. And more specifically, how the importance of individuals from the past is because their life stories inform Métis identity in the present and the future.

The interviews were held between December 2019 and March 2020 and followed the OCAP guidelines (Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession),[167] the *Tri-Council Policy*

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[161] Curtis DuMont, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, December 10, 2020.
[162] Jeannine Dumont Christopherson, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, December 11, 2019.
[163] Kirsten Van Der Velden, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, December 20, 2019.
[164] Mz D, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, March 17, 2020.
[165] Jonas Weselake-George, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, December 21, 2019.
[166] Bruce Flamont, Interview with Krystl Raven, February 14, 2020.
[167] First Nations Information Governance Centre, "Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP): The Path to First Nations Information Governance," May 2014, http://fnigc.ca/sites/default/files/docs/ocap_path_to_fn_information_governance_en_final.pdf.

Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2)[168], and community research protocols.[169] Métis research protocols include (but are not limited to) building reciprocal relationships to gain a relationship of trust; following community protocols; aiming to be inclusive of different genders, sexual identities, and ages in the selection of participants; participant input into analysis; and being educated regarding the diversity and history of the Métis people.[170] Each participant was provided with a research agreement and consent form, and all participants agreed to have the interviews recorded. As my research partners live across Canada, one interview with a local participant was held in person, and the rest were held via telephone. Each interview participant was also given the choice of having their name appear in the final manuscript or of remaining anonymous.[171] Following the interview, gifts were provided to each research partner (a beaded pouch with tobacco). To align with TCPS 2's requirements for the interpretation and dissemination of results, my research partners were given multiple opportunities to view their transcripts and drafts of how their knowledge was included in the dissertation, to allow, if needed, input or further contextualization. Research partners were also offered copies of their finalized transcripts. In addition, each research partner will receive a hard copy of the dissertation.

Furthermore, these interviews were conducted with a post-colonial Indigenous methodology, using the guidelines outlined by Bagele Chilisa (2012). Chilisa outlines methodologies framed within a post-colonial Indigenous paradigm that situates "relational

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[168] Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics Government of Canada, "Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics," February 5, 2016, http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/introduction/.

[169] Lawrence J. Barkwell, *Resources for Métis Researchers*, Aboriginal Education Collection (Winnipeg: Louis Riel Institute of the Manitoba Métis Federation, 1999); Lawrence J. Barkwell et al., eds., *Metis Legacy: A Metis Historiography and Annotated Bibliography* (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 2001); "Principles of Ethical Métis Research" (Métis Centre at National Aboriginal Organization (NAHO), July 2018), https://ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/30555/1/2011_04_ethics.pdf.

[170] "Principles of Ethical Métis Research."

[171] Nancy Janovicek, "Oral History and Ethical Practice: Towards Effective Policies and Procedures," *Journal of Academic Ethics* 4, no. 1–4 (January 10, 2007): 157–74, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-006-9017-1.

ontology, epistemology and axiology as a philosophical framework."[172] These concepts are important in this research because relation building is an important part of Indigenous life and ways of knowing, and research following these principles incorporates the researcher into a circle of relations, in which the researcher is accountable to the research partners.[173] As such, the interviews were semi-structured and informal to allow the participants to lead the discussion through a relational way of knowing, and as one part of a longer relationship.[174] The interviews ranged in length from thirty minutes to around one hour. The interview process acknowledges the concept of "shared or sharing authority" in which both the research partner and the researcher have authority in the research process, and work together to understand the views and experience of the interviewee.[175]

The interviews were holistically analyzed, where each interview was interpreted as a whole rather than using analytical programs such as NVivo. This allowed the Indigenous knowledge shared to guide the analysis, acknowledging the participant's expertise on the subject.[176] However, I am also aware of how gender, age, and class may have affected the knowledge and interpretations that my research partners shared with me.[177] These conversations also guided my analysis of archival material and helped shape the direction of each chapter. As Nancy Janovicek notes, organizing research questions by the knowledge gained in interviews rather than archival documents, can construct a new historical narrative that better reflects the community.[178] To represent this, I highlight quotes from the interviews through all the chapters. While I have tried to accurately reflect the knowledge shared with me in these interviews, the writing and analysis is my own, and at times extra care and attention was required to balance conflicting perspectives to find an analysis that honours and acknowledges my research partners.

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[172] Bagele Chilisa, *Indigenous Research Methodologies* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications, 2012), xv.
[173] Chilisa, 113-114.
[174] Chilisa, Chapter 7.
[175] Steven High, "Sharing Authority: An Introduction," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no. 1 (January 2009): 13, https://doi.org/10.3138/jcs.43.1.12; Stacey Zembrzycki, "Sharing Authority with Baba," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no. 1 (January 2009): 219–38, https://doi.org/10.3138/jcs.43.1.219.
[176] Janovicek, "Oral History and Ethical Practice."
[177] Joan Sangster, "Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History," *Women's History Review* 3, no. 1 (March 1994): 5–28, https://doi.org/10.1080/09612029400200046.
[178] Janovicek, "Oral History and Ethical Practice," 159.

I am grateful to my research partners for taking the time to come together to discuss Gabriel's life and Métis identity.

WHAT FOLLOWS

This work is not a comprehensive biography of Gabriel Dumont that begins with his birth and follows the main events of his life. Instead, I follow the Dumont family over three generations, focusing on themes of Métis identity to discover how their life decisions led to their Métis identity, and what being Métis looked like in their world. Ultimately, I illustrate that the Dumont family reveals connections between Métis identity and kinship, homelands, and culture. Further, Gabriel's life allows an exploration of Métis masculinity, and his position as a Métis hero, through Métis historical consciousness, allows his life to connect the past to the present and reveal the role of historical figures in contemporary Métis identity.

The first two chapters explore the Dumont family over several generations looking at the way different factors influenced and informed their identity. To begin, the first chapter: Lii Faamii, follows the first three generations of the Dumonts on the prairies to elucidate the role of kinship. It is important to note that "the origin of a people is a process, not an event,"[179] and, therefore, there is no single moment that we can pinpoint as the moment when this family identified as Métis, or even that all members of the family identified as Métis at the same time. However, this chapter explains how the decisions made by the Dumont family regarding kinship aided and maintained their development of a Métis identity. I contend that, through their adoption of Métis identity and worldviews, wahkootowin guided their decision-making, and this is demonstrated in the practice of adoption and through the chapters that follow. Further, the Dumont family demonstrates kinship patterns found in previous studies, while also exhibiting variations. Together, this chapter reveals the importance of kinship and Métis identity. The second chapter, Nutr Tayr, moves to recognizing how the Dumont family lived and understood the lands they saw as their home and territory. By exploring the links between livelihood, kinship, and mobility this chapter asserts that the Dumonts expanded their understanding of home to encompass the Métis homelands, and their use and understanding of that land shaped and aided the formation of their Métis identity.

While there is no precise point that signals when the Dumonts identified as Métis,

[179] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 60.

evidence suggests that the first generation of Dumont children were known as Métis at some point in their adulthood. The next two chapters focus on Gabriel Dumont's life to further explore Métis identity and culture through the theme of leadership. Most agree that Gabriel identified as Métis, and that the Métis viewed him as one of them. The community's acceptance of Gabriel as Métis is illustrated through his continued election as leader in the community and explored through three avenues in Chapter three, Nutr Chef. I argue that Métis communities, whether mobile or settled, required leaders who met the needs of the community and represented the political system of their culture: a democratic process grounded in wahkootowin. As a Métis leader, Gabriel placed the community's needs above his own numerous times; this prioritization was informed by the concept of wahkootowin. Additionally, this chapter suggests that exploration of Métis leadership brings another layer of understanding to Métis identity. Chapter four, Niyaanan Michif, uses the lens of cultural capital to explore how Gabriel utilized his Métis identity after the 1885 Resistance to continue his advocacy for the Métis people. This chapter follows Gabriel west during his time on the Wild West Show and several speaking engagements. I illustrate that after the Resistance many Métis people, owing to oppressive policies and racism, chose to keep their identity private. In comparison, Gabriel used his Métis identity to his advantage, highlighting key aspects thereof to the audience to amplify his voice and continue his work as a leader for a nation that by no means disappeared after the Resistance.

Lastly, the chapter Ka Kiskiskchechik, follows Gabriel's life into the present to further understand Métis identity's connection to the past. Heroes are historical figures that occupy important roles in a nations' collective memory. Further, heroes can also become a representation of the nation by embodying characteristics, morals, and practices seen as ideal.[180] Owing to this, I focus on Gabriel's role in contemporary Métis memory. This chapter reveals how historical heroes—like Gabriel—link contemporary Métis people to their history, culture, and legacy of resistance, and informs their understanding of being Métis. Furthermore, the way in which Métis people remember Gabriel adds complexity to our understanding of him and illustrates that his importance is not just from his actions in the past but in the ways he has been mobilized and remembered within Métis society. Altogether, Gabriel Dumont's life reveals interesting

[180] Alexi Gugushvili, Peter Kabachnik, and Ana Kirvalidze, "Collective Memory and Reputational Politics of National Heroes and Villains," *Nationalities Papers* 45, no. 3 (May 2017): 464–84, https://doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2016.1261821.

connections between Métis identity and culture in both the past and the present, and the way wahkootowin threads through all aspects of Métis identity.

1- Li Faamii- The Family

[H]e was kind, like he cared about his family, and he cared about literally anyone that … needed help or was Métis

Alyssa Woodrow- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[1]

Alyssa Woodrow reflected in our interview on how her understanding of Gabriel, passed on to her by her grandmother, emphasized how he placed importance on family and helping those he saw as family. Here the memory of Gabriel has become an example of wahkootowin for Woodrow, passed on through the generations. It is with that emphasis in mind that this chapter explores the role of kinship in the Dumont family and how wahkootowin shaped and informed their understanding of identity. In 1998 Raymond DeMallie challenged Indigenous Studies scholars to place kinship at the forefront of their research, as kinship is foundational to Indigenous societies.[2] DeMallie explained that kinship is more than just social relationships; instead, it knits individuals together "into solidary groups" and is represented through "kin terminologies, descent and inheritance systems, marriage and residence patterns," that form the daily lives of Indigenous peoples.[3] Several scholars in Métis studies have taken up this challenge. For example, in 2012, historians Nicole St-Onge and Carolyn Podruchny reflected on how kinship has been mobilized thus far in Métis studies and demonstrated how family based scholarship helped clarify the murky process of Métis ethnogenesis.[4] They argue "evidence suggests that Métis ethnogenesis in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the northwest of North America was a singularly adaptive manifestation with a particular twist— the Métis used webs of kinship to succeed in an ever-expanding mercantile economy."[5] As St-Onge and Podruchny show, while the fur trade was integral to the context in which the Métis people could

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[1] Allysa Woodrow, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, December 2, 2019.
[2] Nicole St-Onge and Carolyn Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web: Mobility and Kinship in Metis Ethnogenesis," in *Contours of a People Metis Family, Mobility, and History*, ed. St-Onge, Nicole, Podruchny, Carolyn, and Macdougall, Brenda (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 67, http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3571331; Raymond DeMallie, "Kinship: The Foundation for Native American Society," in *Studying Native America : Problems and Prospects.*, ed. Russell Thornton (University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 350.
[3] DeMallie, "Kinship: The Foundation for Native American Society," 306.
[4] St-Onge and Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web" 59.
[5] St-Onge and Podruchny, 81.

emerge, it was the shared worldview found through kinship that linked "family, identification, self-understanding, and commonality,"[6] to promote and maintain Métis identity. Thus, kinship, through incorporation into a Métis family or community, was a primary way in which individuals adopted a Métis identity. This chapter continues the work of those scholars by exploring the Dumont family and by centring kinship to trace how these relationships aided in the Dumont family's integration into Métis families and communities. The Dumonts' journey to becoming Métis began in the late eighteenth-century when Jean-Baptiste Dumont, a French-Canadian man, travelled west and married Josephte, a Tsuut'ina woman. Their relationship and the decisions they made regarding work and family provided their children with marriage options that weaved the Dumonts into Métis families. It is not through Jean-Baptiste and Josephte's relationship alone that we see the family becoming Métis, but rather through their children and the generations that follow that their Métis identity is formed and maintained. Because, as historian Brenda MacDougall states, the "Métis society did not, as some have mused, emerge just nine months after the arrival of the first trader."[7] Rather it is through their children's lives and kinship decisions, within the context of the fur trade in the west, that allowed for a Métis identity to develop.

This chapter shows that the first generations of Dumonts on the plains made kinship choices that followed patterns seen in other Métis families, such as the inclusion of an outsider non-Indigenous male, cross-cousin marriages, and patronymic naming rules.[8] These practices reveal that Jean-Baptiste, Josephte, and their children departed from their cultural identities (French-Canadian and Tsuut'ina) as they made relationship choices incorporating them into Métis families across the plains and aided their adoption and maintenance of a Métis identity.[9] Next I demonstrate that the Dumont family's adoption of Métis identity is demonstrated in their

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[6] St-Onge and Podruchny, 68.

[7] Brenda Macdougall, *One of the Family: Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 60.

[8] Heather Devine, *People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660–1900* (Calgary, AB.: Lancaster: University of Calgary Press; Gazelle, 2004); John E. Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis," *Prairie Forum* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 1–14; Macdougall, *One of the Family*.

[9] Macdougall, *One of the Family*; Robert Alexander Innes, *Elder Brother and the Law of the People: Contemporary Kinship and Cowessess First Nation* (University of Manitoba Press, 2013).

adoption of children, signifying their responsibilities to family and community that aligned with Métis understandings of kinship. I argue that in using the lens of wahkootowin, it is revealed that the timing of the family's entrance into the northwest allowed their adoption and expression of Métis identity to occur quickly. Altogether, the Dumont family reveals the importance of kinship and that there is no rigid process to becoming Métis.

LI MAARYAAZH- MARRIAGE

When Jean-Baptiste Dumont left Lower Canada and moved to the northwest in the late eighteenth century, the stage was set for his descendants to become Métis. Jean-Baptiste came to the plains working as a voyageur and master factor in the Edmonton District. Like many fur-trade men, Jean-Baptiste met and married an Indigenous (Tsuut'ina) woman—Josephte—in 1794, a practice that was highly encouraged by French fur-trade companies.[10] Specifically, the North-West Company (NWC) viewed these intermarriages as a vital means of creating advantageous trade and knowledge networks, and by 1806 the company even created policies under which women of mixed descent were considered ideal fur-trade wives.[11] Fur-trade marriages existed in many forms, including those that were done *à la façon du pays* (custom of the country) and marriages recognized by the Catholic Church. In some areas across North America, children were

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[10] Charles Denney, "Handwritten Notes Re Jean Baptiste Dumont 216000" (1974), M7144 file 216,000 Dumont, Jean Baptiste, Glenbow Archives; Warren Sinclair, "Jean Baptiste Dumont Descendancy Table," Warren Sinclair Metis Genealogy, Glenbow Archives, accessed July 24, 2019, https://www.glenbow.org/collections/search/findingAids/archhtm/extras/sinclair/m-8736-226.pdf; Susan Sleeper-Smith, "Women, Kin, and Catholicism: New Perspectives on the Fur Trade" in *Rethinking the Fur Trade: Cultures of Exchange in an Atlantic World*, ed. Susan Sleeper-Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 443–80; Jennifer S. H. Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities," *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3, no. 1 (1983): 39–46; Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670–1870* (Winnipeg, Man: Watson & Dwyer, 1980); Sylvia Van Kirk, "'The Custom of the Country': An Examination of Fur Trade Marriage Practices." In *Rethinking the Fur Trade: Cultures of Exchange in an Atlantic World*, ed. Susan Sleeper-Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 481–518.

[11] Sylvia Van Kirk, "'The Custom of the Country';" Brown, Jennifer S. H., "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities;" Brenda MacDougall, "'The Comforts of Married Life': Metis Family Life, Labour, and the Hudson's Bay Company," *Labour / Le Travail* 61 (2008): 9–39; Jennifer S. H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country*, Oklahoma paperbacks ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties': Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670–1870* (Winnipeg, Man: Watson & Dwyer, 1980).

fully incorporated into the Indigenous wife's family and culture; some families sent the children east or back to the father's home to be educated. These kinship decisions partly occurred because the relationships between the fur-trade men and Indigenous women were brief, as the men worked on contract basis and usually returned to Montréal when their contract ended. However, this practice changed as forts began to move farther west and into the interior.[12] The move inland was sparked by the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) in 1670, and its exclusive charter (per the Crown) to Rupert's Land and the resources it provided. By the turn of the eighteenth century, the HBC pushed further west, establishing forts along the rivers leading into the interior.[13] The French fur trade companies, originally located east of the Great Lakes area, quickly recognized that the HBC was making inroads into the region and in 1779 the NWC, formed after New France's removal from North America, began to shadow HBC's inland expansion. The result of these changes was that Indigenous people (First Nations and Métis) had more direct access to competing fur-trade companies.[14]

While the fur-trade forts were pushing inland, the population of the northwest remained primarily Indigenous. The HBC relied on the full-time contracts of Indigenous people and by the turn of the nineteenth century only employed five hundred non-Indigenous personnel in North America. In comparison, the NWC used a more labour-intensive program with over 1200 employees amongst its forts and supply lines.[15] Additionally, in the northwest, because of the distance to return east, an increased number of men worked without a contract (freemen). They often remained on the plains for longer periods of time, resulting in long-lasting relationships with Indigenous women. People in the northwest began to live and work lives based on the fur trade and buffalo hunt, changing the cultural landscape, and leading to the emergence of the Métis.

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[12] Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*; Jennifer S. H. Brown and Jacqueline Louise Peterson, *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2010); Brown, *Strangers in Blood*.
[13] Arthur J Ray, "Hudson's Bay Company," Canadian Encyclopedia, January 19, 2023, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/hudsons-bay-company; Stephen R. Bown, *The Company: The Rise and Fall of the Hudson's Bay Empire* (Toronto, Ontario: Doubleday Canada, 2020), chap. 7.
[14] Ray, "Hudson's Bay Company."
[15] Bown, *The Company*, 206.

According to the historian John Foster, it was this introduction of the freeman, or an "outsider male in the historical processes, that gave rise to the Métis."[16] These outsider men were not fur-trade officers, but rather men,

> …rarely of British origin, the *Canadien* or "eastern Indian" freeman was a phenomenon of the Montreal-based fur trade and its *en drouine* (itinerant peddling) system of trade. Usually he was an *engage* who had established himself as a man of consequence among his fellows. Physical prowess counted for much, but not all; generosity and a penchant for an evocative song and an entertaining story were recognized as well. The man of consequence influenced others and affected the image of being less influenced by others. The man of consequence acted to become a "master" of his own affairs and circumstances. The logic of this ethos among the fur trade *engages* led some to end their relationship with the trading post as *engages* and become *les hommes libres*.[17]

These freemen developed different relationships with the Indigenous women on the plains than fur traders in the east. On the western plains, many freemen lived with their wives' families, learning certain skills from their communities. They also forged relationships with other men in the group and eventually adopted the lifestyle of wintering over; that is, not returning to the east.[18] In comparison to the fur trade elites in the mid-nineteenth century, freemen were discouraged from marrying white women, further encouraging their long-term relationships with Indigenous women.[19] Foster argues that it was this act of wintering over that enabled their children's Métis ethnogenesis.[20] These men, inspired to remain in the northwest by the growing fur trade, created new hunting communities with their families.

The Dumont family follows this pattern of the outsider male wintering over, but with some variations, which indicates that there is no rigid process. Because of the timing of Jean-

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[16] Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male," 3.
[17] Foster, 2.
[18] Foster, 6–7.
[19] Adele Perry, *Colonial Relations: The Douglas-Connolly Family and the Nineteenth-Century Imperial World*, Critical Perspectives on Empire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), chap. 4, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139794701.
[20] Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male."

Baptiste's move west, and the number of records of this family, the Dumont family provides ample details of how kinship was a vital part of this process. Jean-Baptiste was not a freeman when he first arrived on the plains and met Josephte, rather he was connected to the fur-trade forts (XY Co. and then the NWC) and worked as a voyageur.[21] Their relationship was originally short lived, in 1802 Jean-Baptiste left the area.[22] During this period, "having 'turned off' his country wife… and family to another freeman, Paul Durand, Jean left for Lower Canada in 1802, only to return two or three years later to challenge Durand for his family."[23] This practice of 'turning off' was not unusual in the fur trade, and also occurred when fur trade elites wanted to return east and marry a white wife, a practice that increased through the mid-nineteenth century. In leaving, these men often paid their Indigenous wife an annuity or provided a large sum to a voyageur who agreed to marry her.[24]

For the Dumonts, this part of their relationship demonstrates several things. First, it confirms that the couple were not living with Josephte's family. Second, it reveals there was a well-established population of men of mixed descent in the area, a community strong enough to allow Josephte to remain in the region when Jean-Baptiste returned and to find a new partner quickly.[25] It also shows some aspects of wahkootowin in practice, and in some ways how this demonstrates Jean-Baptiste was still an outsider, willing to leave his family behind. This pattern also shows already the way wahkootowin was a core aspect of the emerging Métis community in the northwest. These men who left the plains did not just leave their wives, removed from their community with no support. Instead, the trading communities supported the women, showing wahkootowin in practice in those communities. In these situations, younger single men were able to gain a spouse and the support she could provide him, as well as an accoutrement of goods to

[21] Denney, Charles, "Handwritten Notes" (n.d.), M7144 File 216,250 Dumont, Jean Baptiste, Glenbow Archives; Sinclair, "Jean Baptiste Dumont Descendancy Table."
[22] Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male," 3.
[23] Foster, 3.
[24] Perry, *Colonial Relations*, 84.
[25] Brenda MacDougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades," in *The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories*, ed. Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 89–113.

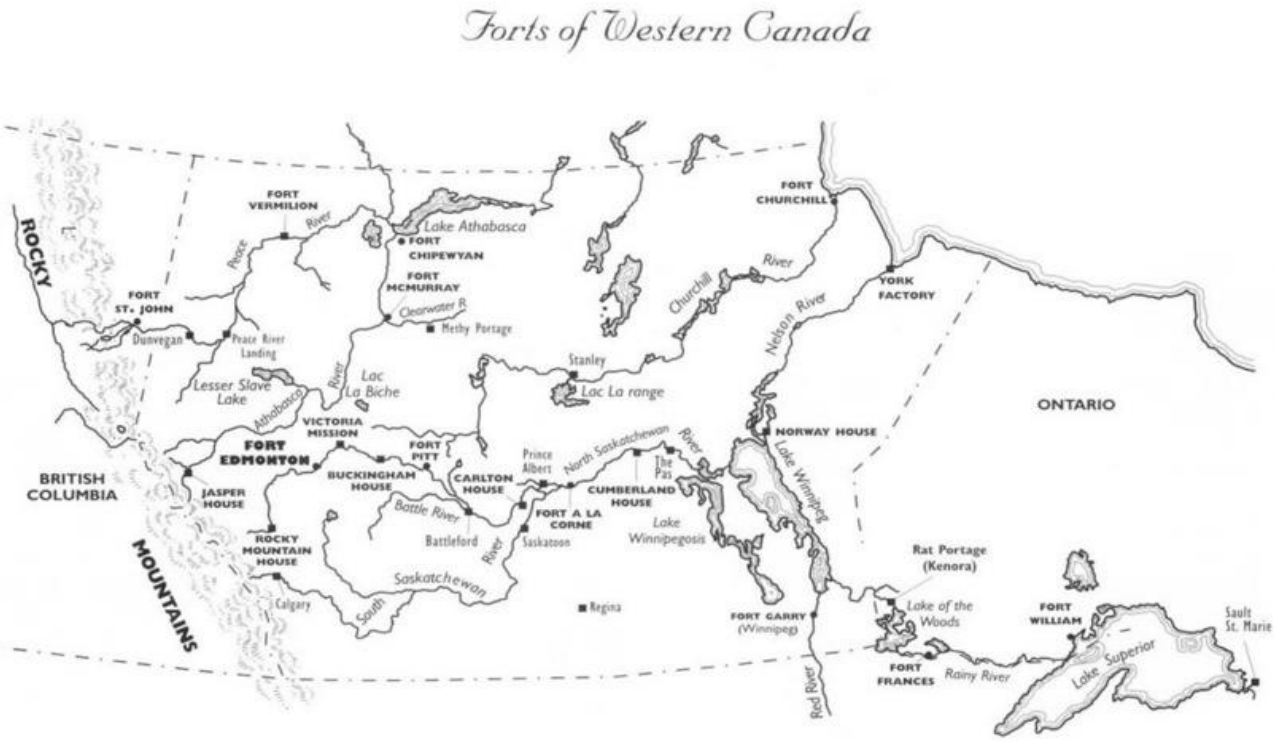

Figure 2 Silversides *Fort des Prairies*

help their success as hunters and trappers.[26] It also ensured that any children who remained with their mother continued to be raised within this community, supporting the development of a Métis identity. Third, as Foster stresses, it is Jean-Baptiste's return in 1804 and becoming a freeman who remains in the northwest that leads to the Dumont family's incorporation into Métis families and communities.

Jean-Baptiste and Josephte's relationship and children show patterns that I interpret as the first signs of this family being incorporated into Métis culture. However, not all scholars agree that a Métis identity was evident in the region at that time. While the incorporation of an outsider male as described by Foster is emphasized in Heather Devine's work, and she agrees that the geographical context of the northwest is enmeshed with the process of Métis ethnogenesis, Devine sees conversion to Christianity by missionaries as a necessary marker of Métis identity.

[26] Perry, 84.

For Devine, then, Métis ethnogenesis happened in phases across the northwest, marked by the addition of missionaries to the region.[27]

The Dumont family complicates Devine's understanding of Métis identity in the region, as they were in the northwest before missions were established. Using the Desjarlais family as an example, Devine concludes that while relationships with children of mixed descent occurred anywhere that European and Indigenous people interacted, the Métis population in the current north-central region of Alberta, did not form a Métis identity at the same time as Red River. Devine states that because the region saw less permanent settlement and more mobile communities, the only Christianizing influences came from older freemen or Indigenous individuals who practiced Catholic rituals.[28] As such, Devine sees this region as "more or less homogenous culturally. And that culture was aboriginal" until the missionaries Christianized the hunting bands.[29] This chapter shows that it was the Dumont's incorporation into Métis families and communities was not reliant on the establishment of missions, but rather the unique culture that emerged within the northwest due to the fur trade and the kinship ties created within it.

In the first generation of children, we see patterns recognized in other Métis families, demonstrating that this family was beginning to identify away from Josephte's Tsuut'ina culture and Jean-Baptiste's French-Canadian culture. One of these similarities was the naming practices that Jean-Baptiste and Josephte followed for their children. The five children were named Susanne (b. 1785), Gabriel/Nampesh (b. 1795), Cecile (b. 1800), Jean Baptiste/Ska-kas-ta-ow (b. 1805), and Isidore/Ekapow (b. 1833).[30] These names followed a common pattern seen in children of mixed descent with French fathers—some children had both French and Indigenous names.[31] Heather Devine explains that Métis naming practices were influenced by both Euro-Canadian and

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[27]Heather Devine, *People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660-1900* (Calgary, Alta.: Lancaster: University of Calgary Press; Gazelle, 2004), 138–130.
[28] Devine, 139–40.
[29] Devine, 140.
[30] The Indigenous names of the brothers are found in the genealogical work of Charles Denney and Gail Morin, but also found in historical records such as Hudson's Bay Company Records, Census Records, and Oblates Records.
[31] There are no known Indigenous names for the two sisters, Susanne and Cecile, in the available records. Thus, it is impossible to know if only the male children received these dual names, or if there are simply more references about the male children in the records and oral histories, and therefore their Indigenous names are known.

Indigenous customs.[32] Devine notes that when *engagés* married Indigenous women they brought their naming customs with them. Thus, the inclusion of French names was likely at Jean-Baptiste's request and created a multigenerational legacy of unique Métis Dumont names, stemming from the existing French-Catholic practice of name duplication.[33] The presence of the Church was not necessary in the northwest for these Catholic naming practices to be followed. This naming tradition travelled with the voyageurs from New France, through Lower Canada, and to Rupert's Land, resulting in hyphenated double first-names as a common way to differentiate between children with the same first names, and this is seen in the Dumont family.[34] Macdougall argues that this naming custom likely maintained a connection to ancestors and included ritual baptisms on the portage, indicating the social and spiritual significance of the repetitive use of certain names within a family.[35]

Just as Devine provides an overview of Algonquin naming practices[36] to compare to Métis nomenclature, here I elucidate Tsuut'ina naming conventions to reveal how the first Dumont children's names step away from that custom. Tsuut'ina communities usually named girls immediately after birth, while male babies were named about a week later.[37] In both cases, names were usually given by a community member; girls were named by a medicine woman and boys by a medicine man or successful warrior in the community.[38] However, what is unclear is how this practice was handled in the case of marriages in which Tsuut'ina women married an outsider, or if this dual naming of French and Tsuut'ina names was already adopted into the community through previous cross-cultural marriages, as Josephte was also known by her French name in historical records. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was common for Tsuut'ina individuals to have a name and multiple nicknames, which may have allowed the adoption of

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[32] Devine, *People Who Own Themselves*, app. 2.
[33] Foster discusses how the freemen brought a type of "folk" Catholicism to the prairies before the presence of Catholic missions. Name duplication happened as the Church only approved a small list of names. Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male," 7; Devine, *People Who Own Themselves*, app. 2.
[34] Devine, *People Who Own Themselves*, app. 2.
[35] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 78.
[36] Devine, *People Who Own Themselves*, app. 2.
[37] Diamond Jenness, *The Sarcee Indians of Alberta*, Bulletin (National Museum of Canada). Anthropological Series; No. 23 (Ottawa: JOPatenaude, 1938), 18.
[38] E. Sapir, "Personal Names among the Sarcee Indians," *American Anthropologist* 26, no. 1 (1924): 108–19; Diamond Jenness, *The Sarcee Indians of Alberta*.

non-Indigenous names before Jean-Baptiste's move west.[39] However, the consequence was that the first generation of Dumont boys were known by multiple names by the time they reached adulthood. Likely, the Indigenous names known for this first generation of Dumont children were nicknames assigned to them in relation to their personality, gender, or appearance as these were more commonly used in comparison to ceremonially assigned names.[40] These dual names were not exceptional in other groups on the plains who identified as Métis, and it helped identify this and future generations of Dumonts in the west as having common social and spiritual aspects to those already identifying as Métis.

The repetition of these bi-cultural names is a prominent feature of these three generations of the Dumont family, and the continuation thereof illustrates a cultural practice that becomes associated with the Dumonts as "naming in all forms… established linkages between ancestors and their descendants, thus ensuring a continuity of family memory through this generational bridging mechanism."[41] Owing to the repetitive nature of the French names in the first three generations, I refer to the first generation of male children by their Indigenous name for clarity as I track the family's lives. Additionally, because of the repetition of last names in this dissertation, I will use first or full name throughout when referring to Métis individuals to avoid confusion. While Josephte and Jean-Baptiste's name choices for their children reveal the adoption of a Métis cultural practice, another important aspect to the Dumont family's Métis identity is their decisions regarding marriage.

As with their naming practices, the Dumont children's marriages unfolded differently than for their Tsuut'ina relatives. In Tsuut'ina culture, boys were raised by their mothers until the age of nine or ten, after which they were sent away to live with their fathers and become part of that community.[42] Girls remained with their mother until they were married. Courting in the Tsuut'ina communities was an active event. Individuals could court numerous people at once and even flirted with married individuals.[43] However, girls of marriageable age were never allowed to

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[39] Sapir, "Personal Names among the Sarcee Indians," 108–19.
[40] Devine, *People Who Own Themselves*, app. 2.
[41] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 83.
[42] Jenness, *The Sarcee Indians of Alberta*, Bulletin (National Museum of Canada). Anthropological Series; No. 23 (Ottawa: JOPatenaude, 1938), 19.
[43] Jenness, 22.

publicly mingle with an admirer, and word of mouth was used to determine if a girl was interested in a young man.[44] Youths usually chose their own marriage partners, whereafter the parents finalized the arrangements. Moreover, polygamy was not uncommon in Tsuut'ina communities. This often occurred when someone had lost their spouse—family members subsequently incorporated the widower into an existing marriage to provide support.[45] However, Jean-Baptiste and Josephte's children did not marry into Tsuut'ina families.

In part, their marriage choices were also shaped by a lack of connection to Jean-Baptiste's family back east. By all accounts Jean-Baptiste, upon returning to Rupert's Land in 1804, seems to have cut ties with the east.[46] Nor is there any record of Jean-Baptiste and Josephte's children being sent back to his family to be raised or educated, which was a common practice for some fur-trade families, in part influenced by their class. Historian Erin Millions' work illustrates how those she refers to as British-Métis—maintained "British roots, socio-economic privilege, Protestant religions, and their claims as British subjects" that influenced their understandings of identities and roles within the British Empire.[47] Millions elucidates a period where these individuals' British ancestry resulted in efforts to obtain a British-style education for their children. Some families sent their children away to larger centers to achieve what the family viewed as a superior education.[48] Additionally, many HBC officer fathers moved from post to post through their careers and often travelled abroad during year-long furloughs, regularly bringing their families along, extending their mobility beyond the Métis homelands and distancing their connections from Métis communities and culture.[49] Families who maintained an active connection to their British Empire kin in the east and abroad did not erase their Indigenous kinship ties.[50] However, this transcontinental mobility differentiated their experiences,

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[44] Jenness, 22.
[45] Jenness, 24–25.
[46] "Wintering the Outsider Adult Male."
[47] Erin Millions, "Portraits and Gravestones: Documenting the Transnational Lives of Nineteenth-Century British-Métis Students," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association / Revue de La Société Historique Du Canada* 29, no. 1 (2018): 4, https://doi.org/10.7202/1065712ar.
[48] Millions, 5.
[49] Millions, 7; Perry, *Colonial Relations*, chap. 4.
[50] Millions; Perry, chap. 4.

understandings of identity, and marriage opportunities in comparison to Métis families who remained on the plains.

Importantly, children of mixed descent who went away for education could return to the northwest, and that affected the ways they identified. Those who maintained connections with Métis communities and families often identified as Métis upon returning to the northwest. For instance, Cuthbert Grant, born in 1793 at Fort Tremblant, of Scottish and Cree ancestry went to Montreal, and possibly Scotland, for his education.[51] Grant returned and worked for the fur-trade forts for several years before marrying into a Métis family and community. His shift away from the fur trade company to living and working with his Métis kin further integrated him into a Métis family, community, and likely a more Métis centered understanding of self.[52] Louis Riel was also sent east for education before returning to the northwest. He appears to have maintained connections to his Indigenous identity through his educational period, but his return deepened his connection to the Métis community of Red River, and he married a Métis woman.[53] Through these two examples, it can be reasoned that remaining (or returning) to the northwest and marrying into a Métis family were important aspects of maintaining a Métis identity.

The geographic influence on marriages and identity is further explored in Devine's work on the Desjarlais family, signifying that fur traders who stayed further east had different marriage options than for those who remained in the northwest. Devine indicates that in the St. Louis area marriage options for fur traders resulted in complex kin relations forming.[54] Despite increasing Roman Catholic Church regulations on family life, fur traders often practiced multiple marriages: a marriage to a Euro-Canadian/American woman (including those of mixed descent) in the settlement in addition to marriages *a la façon du pays* with Indigenous women in the Missouri

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[51] Margaret Arnett MacLeod, W. L Morton, and Alice R Brown, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown: Warden of the Plains of Red River*, 2014, http://www.deslibris.ca/ID/448058; Krystl Raven, "Ka Oopikihtamashook': Becoming Family," *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 14, no. 4 (2018): 324, https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180118821170.
[52] Raven, "Ka Oopikihtamashook'," 324.
[53] Hamon discusses Riel's education and his rhetoric that negotiated his Indigeneity within that educational system. M. Max Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise: Louis Riel and the Métis Nation That Canada Never Was, 1840–1875* (Montreal; Kingston; London; Chicago: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020).
[54] Devine, *People Who Own Themselves,* 63.

and Mississippi regions.[55] The marriages and the husband's long periods away were, per Devine, tolerated by both wives, due to the "wealth, influence, and commercial opportunity that flowed" to their families.[56] In comparison, the northwest's distance and the isolation from the east saw fur traders engage in long-term monogamous marriages with Indigenous and women of mixed descent, and their children who remained in the region also found their spouses there.

The Dumont family, in their decision to remain in the northwest, chose their spouses following an intercommunity marriage pattern that strengthened connections between families. As a freeman, Jean-Baptiste's children were not socialized and educated within "Euro-Canadian values, attitudes, and behaviors,"[57] they were raised within the buffalo hunt lifestyle. Additionally, existing communities of Métis people were well established by the time Jean-Baptiste and Josephte's children married. As a larger population of those with mixed ancestry was established, more regionally based opportunities for marriage existed, resulting in intercommunity marriages in the northwest.[58]

A population of Métis already existed at the time of the Dumont family's entry into the northwest and this influenced the family's marriage choices. Josephte's relationship with the Métis man known as Jean Baptiste Bruneau before her relationship with Jean-Baptiste Dumont hints at the population shift in the region and its effects on marriage decisions, as Josephte had not married a Tsuut'ina man. This population of mixed-descent traders and buffalo hunt families increased as the fur trade economy grew in the region providing more Métis marriage options for the Dumont children. These Métis families also aimed to incorporate new and unrelated individuals through marriage for several reasons, "how much of men and women ended up marrying one another. It's two different communities where a Michif man would always, not always, but very often, marry a woman from another community… made sure that we were not closely related."[59] Marriages between Métis communities (or with non-Métis communities) brought resources (economic and social) and strengthen alliances.[60] The Métis practice of

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[55] Devine, 64.
[56] Devine, 71.
[57] Devine, 91.
[58] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, I65.
[59] Bruce Flamont, Interview with Krystl Raven, February 14, 2020.
[60] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 65, 69–70.

marrying out also meant that the Métis families were happy to incorporate the Dumont children into their families via marriage.

In this period, there were multiple motivations for marriage beyond romance and partnership. Marriage prospects often arose through their parents' coalitions, which had already been established through earlier marriages, kinship connections, or livelihood practices.[61] The Dumont children likely married into established Métis families owing to their frequent interaction with them through their parent's livelihoods. Possibly some of these marriages were arranged or greatly influenced by their parents. Macdougall discusses arranged marriages in connection to Sakitawak. Noting that despite the Roman Catholic clergy's attempts to change Métis attitudes and practices, historically marriages were arranged to ensure a good partnership but also to connect the two families "economically, politically, and socially."[62] Macdougall provides an example of how the children may not agree with their parents' choice of future spouse, but local clergy who were expected to support Métis cultural practices of arranged marriage, even if they did not fully understand the complexities of the practice, provided pressure.[63] Parents, then, had exceptional influence in the marriage choices for some Métis children. This power is also confirmed in Doris Jeanne Mackinnon's biography of Marie Rose Delorme Smith. In 1877 Marie Rose married a European trader Charlie Smith who courted her through her parents. By Marie Rose's accounts, Charlie Smith was a successful trader with "Lots of carts, horses and ...four men working for him," making him an appealing marriage prospect.[64] Marie Rose was clear in her writing that she did not want to marry Smith,

> 'Oh say, Mother,' I cried, 'you know that white man… he grabbed me and began to talk… But first he kissed me.' So ended my courting days…. The next day, this big Norwegian trader, with his flat sleigh and jingling harness, drove up to our house. He was warmly greeted by my mother and step-father. There was much pleasant conversation between the three, and then Smith asked my mother for permission to marry me. As she looked surprised he said, 'I asked her yesterday, and she said yes.'

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[61] Devine, *People Who Own Themselves*, 5.
[62] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 191.
[63] Macdougall, 191–92.
[64] Doris Jeanne MacKinnon, *Metis Pioneers: Marie Rose Delorme Smith and Isabella Clark Hardisty Lougheed* (Edmonton, Alberta: The University of Alberta Press, 2018), 218.

> But I didn't know what he was saying, I shouted at them. It made no difference. It was settled between my parents and Charlie right then and Charlie gave my mother a present of Fifty dollars. Was I not sold for that sum? After Charlie left mother called me to her, 'Come here, Marie Rose, you promised to marry that man'… I tried over and over again to explain, but it was useless.[65]

While Marie Rose had no say in this marriage, her accounts reveal a traditional Métis wedding feast and dance showing that Métis cultural practices were followed to celebrate the wedding. This again implies the parents' arrangement of the marriage was not seen as outside Métis cultural practices. Yet, while she was treated well by Charlie Smith, her writings continued to position the relationship as an arranged marriage she did not want or agree to.[66] Together these historical examples demonstrate that arranged marriages existed in Métis families, implying nuptials were often more than a romantic relationship. They aligned families together in a relationship that had benefits but also responsibilities attached. While there is no evidence regarding Jean-Baptiste and Josephte arranging marriages for their children, it is likely that the nuptials were more than just romantic.

The first generation of Dumont children's marriages introduced three matrimonial patterns commonly found in Métis families and communities: finding marriage partners in relationship to livelihood, cross-cousin marriages, and patronymic naming. Marriage choices were part of a "coherent organization of system of practices with an underlying conscious, conceptual order manifested because of wahkootowin, which, in turn, supported and sustained their economic and religious needs."[67] Further, the marriages demonstrate the complexity of the relationship between beliefs and behaviors that are part of a cultural identity.[68] These precedents of social organization endure in the Métis culture despite the frequent mobility and vastness of the Métis homelands in which this culture existed.[69] The first Métis marriage pattern practised by

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[65] MacKinnon, 218–19.
[66] MacKinnon, 220.
[67] Brenda Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 71.
[68] Macdougall, 71.
[69] St-Onge and Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web," 81.

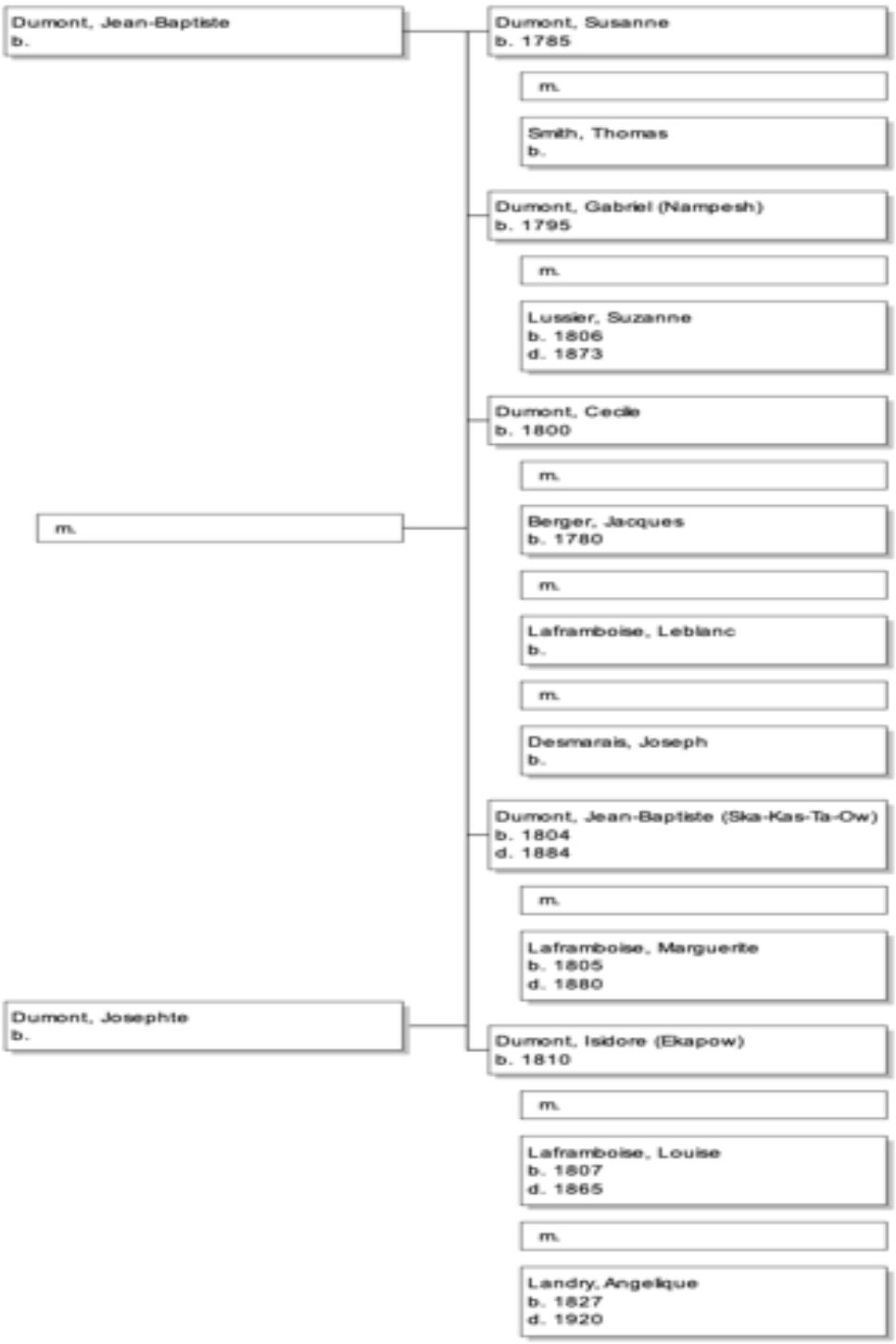

Figure 3 Dumont family and first generation of children

the Dumonts was finding marriage partners through family relationships developed in economic activities connected to the fur trade. As Nicole St-Onge and Carolyn Podruchny argue, what

makes the Métis so unique from other groups in the northwest was that their ethnogenesis emerged from a "large variety of other ethnic groups and because, for the greater part of its history, it was not rooted to any particular place. The Métis carved economic niches within the fur trade as voyageurs and servants, as suppliers of pemmican, as freighters and trip men, as small traders and freemen, and as interpreters, guides, and go-betweens," creating an identity that saw the world as mobile and interconnected.[70] It is their connection to the fur trade that, combined with kinship connections across the vast Métis homelands, created and maintained Métis culture through the first generations.[71]

Evidence shows that the male children of Jean-Baptiste and Josephte were working within the fur trade and its related industries. The sons of Jean-Baptiste and Josephte were well educated for life on the plains, speaking several Indigenous languages, they aligned with the Nehiyaw, and travelled amongst the established Métis population in the region, and it was here they found their marriage partners (see fig 3 which provides the marriage partners of each of the first generation of Dumont children born in the northwest). Nampesh worked as hunter and guide for an HBC column travelling into modern southern Alberta to pick up HBC furs. He found some trouble and escaped north to avoid arrest.[72] Nampesh, later working as a guide, returned to the northern Alberta region and the Métis settlement of Mânitow Sâkahikanihk (Lac Ste. Anne), where he met and married Suzanne Lussier, a Métis woman whose family was in the region.[73] Ska-kas-ta-ow and Ekapow moved further east towards the newly established Red River settlement. Charles Thompson suggests that Ekapow was enticed to the settlement because of his reputation in the fur trade, arriving at Fort Pitt in 1831. However, his employment with the HBC was short lived as the company could not provide work for everyone after the merger with the NWC in 1821. He worked as a middleman between the years of 1829 and 1841 for the HBC when his contract was finally not renewed.[74] Ekapow therefore found himself working with buffalo hunt leader Jean

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[70] St-Onge and Podruchny, 62.
[71] St-Onge and Podruchny, 80–81.
[72] James Grierson MacGregor, *John Rowand, Czar of the Prairies* (Western Producer Prairie Books, 1978) as cited in Thompson, 6.
[73] Gail Morin, "Descendants of Jean Baptiste Dumont 3693" (n.d.), Gail Morin Genealogy Database, Glenbow Archives.
[74] Douglas N. Sprague and R. P. Frye, *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation: The Development and Dispersal of the Red River Settlement, 1820-1900* (Pemmican Publications, 1983), tbl.3.

Baptiste Wilkie, who was located south of Red River.[75] The brothers' work in the region led to Ska-kas-ta-ow and Ekapow marrying into Joseph François Laframboise's family, a well-established hunting family.[76] The Laframboise family had moved to the Pembina and Red River area after living further west at the Fort des Prairies.[77] Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge's research ties these two families to the Fort de Prairies post region, and notes that several families from that area were also recorded at Whitehorse Plains, south of Red River, after the NWC's merger with the HBC in 1821.[78] Jean Baptiste worked at Fort des Prairies from 1804 to about 1815, and Joseph François Laframboise was also there from 1816 to 1821. Joseph Laframboise Sr. (dit Fafard, aka Leblanc), was born on Mackinac Island and married Josephte (Assiniboine) at the St. François Xavier Parish (near Pembina) in 1799.[79] Through marriage, the Laframboise family connected to several prominent buffalo hunting groups over the following decades, including Trottier hunt brigade and the Dumont family.[80]

Macdougall and St-Onge provide an exploration of the way hunting brigades were supported through a socio-cultural network based on kinship.[81] They use the Trottier brigade to demonstrate the socio-cultural organization of Métis hunting brigades and through genealogical reconstruction and social networking graphs determine that individuals in the families involved

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[75] James Grierson MacGregor, *John Rowand, Czar of the Prairies* (Western Producer Prairie Books, 1978) as cited in Thompson, *Red Sun*, 6–7.

[76]Brenda MacDougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades," in *The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories*, ed. Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 101; Susan Sleeper-Smith, "'[A]n Unpleasant Transaction on This Frontier': Challenging Female Autonomy and Authority at Michilimackinac," *Journal of the Early Republic* 25, no. 3 (2005): 417–43; Denney, Charles, "Genealogical Chart Isidore Dumont and Louise Faframboise 216500A" (n.d.), M7144 file 216,625 Dumont, Gabriel, Glenbow Archives; Denney, Charles, "Genealogical Chart of Jean Baptiste Dumont and Marguerite Laframboise 216 250" (n.d.), M7144 file 216,001 Dumont, Gabriel, Glenbow Archives.

[77] Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility: Metis Buffalo-Hunting Brigades," *Manitoba History*, no. 71 (2013): 29.

[78] Macdougall and St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility," 29.

[79] Macdougall and St-Onge, 29.

[80] Cheryl Lynn Troupe, "Métis Women: Social Structure, Urbanization and Political Activism, 1850-1980" (Masters Thesis, Saskatoon, Sk, University of Saskatchewan, 2009), http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/etd-12112009-150223, 62-68.

[81] Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility: Metis Buffalo-Hunting Brigades," *Manitoba History*, no. 71 (2013): 21+.

were connected to one another.[82] For example, in the Trottier brigade the Laframboise and Wilkie sisters connected unrelated men, including Gabriel, to the hunting brigade through marriages. In these examples, the sisters married leaders from other brigades. While this did not expand the Trottier brigade itself, it demonstrates the expansion and development of social and economic cohesion needed, connecting multiple families of established hunt brigades.[83] Likely through Fort des Prairie, Jean Baptiste Dumont knew the Laframboise family, and combined with the two brothers moving to the Red River area these relationships were strengthened through marriages. This linked the families, not only to each other, but to the extended kin networks of the brigades.

The daughters also married into families that lived on the plains, though it was not clear if these families were Métis. Suzanne married Thomas Smith, and Cecile married Jacques Berger.[84] Records do not clarify whether these two men were Métis or their marriage dates; however, Cecile's second marriage was also into the Métis Laframboise family to Joseph Laframboise Jr.[85] It is through these nuptials that the Dumont family became connected to families already identifying and living as Métis within the northwest. These bi-cultural families hunted and worked on the prairies and were not loyal to either the fur-trade companies or fully living in First Nations communities, developing a unique culture that the Dumonts adopted.

Marriage between buffalo hunting families appeared again in the next generation with the most well-known couple of the family: Gabriel Dumont and Madeleine Wilkie. Madeleine was the daughter of Jean-Baptiste Wilkie and Isabella Azure, and she married Gabriel, son of Ekapow Dumont. The Dumonts and the Wilkies hunted together for several years before the marriage of their children.[86] Hunting together meant that the Dumonts and Wilkies travelled together for months at a time following the buffalo; marriages between their children made sense as the families were close, and the marriage further aligned them. Gabriel (age twenty), and Madeleine wed in Pembina, a primary buffalo-hunting location, and created a kinship connection in addition

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[82] Macdougall and St-Onge, 26.
[83] Macdougall and St-Onge, 26.
[84] Likely this is Jacque Berger, identified as Métis in Martha Foster's work. Father of Pierre Berger of the Spring Creek Band (see fig.5). Martha Harroun Foster, *We Know Who We Are: Métis Identity in a Montana Community* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 36, 85.
[85] Morin, "Descendancy Charts of Jean Baptiste Dumont 3693."
[86] Morin, "Family Book Gabriel Dumont 13654"; Morin, "Descendancy Chart Jean Baptiste Dumont-3693."

to the one forged through their parents' shared livelihood.[87] Ekapow, having married into the Laframboise family, created alliances through his wife's relations, which connected him to the Wilkies in an economic and social manner that was further developed through the marriage of their children.[88] For many the alliance between the Dumonts and the Wilkies merged two influential buffalo hunt families together. However, this appears to not be an arranged marriage. Thompson's interviews with family members revealed that it was the threat of the smallpox that made Gabriel want to marry Madeleine as he realized his feelings for her after being concerned she had succumbed to smallpox.[89] While the marriage was one of love it also aligned two important families. Thompson describes, "Gabriel Dumont had married into one of, if not the most important Métis families in the nation…. And Madeleine was moving into one of the most important clans north of the border. Also, Madeleine had married the most important Brayroo ever born into the Métis Nation."[90] Thus, the couple was an important relationship within the broader Métis community. By marrying into families that had already established successful lives on the prairies, these generations of Dumont family gained a strong support system further integrating them into Métis culture and identity. Gabriel and Madeleine's marriage occurred at a point where the family had become Métis and were known in the northwest as central in Métis

[87] Geoff Burtonshaw, "Handwritten Notes Re Isidore Dumont 1808 Dit Ekapow," n.d., M8450 File 59, Glenbow Archives; Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility: Metis Buffalo-Hunting Brigades," *Manitoba History*, no. 71 (2013); Brenda MacDougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades," in *The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories*, ed. Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 89–113.
[88] Devine, *People Who Own Themselves*, 5.
[89] Thompson cites this information came from Joseph Fleury (1976) and Robert Wilkie Dumont (1994) in his interviews with them. Thompson, *Red Sun*, 61.
[90] Thompson, 61.

Figure 4 Madeleine and Gabriel Dumont c. 1860s Gabriel would have been in his twenties in this photo. Photo courtesy of Assumption College, Edmund Mallet Collection

politics and economics. Their marriage, like the other children of this generation helped maintain the family's Métis identity.

The second marriage pattern the Dumont family used was cross-cousin marriages. A single marriage may form a relationship, but multiple marriages between two families formed an alliance.[91] Macdougall observes that these cross-cousin alliances were encouraged by parents to create marriages between "the children of their siblings of the opposite sex: men encouraged their children to marry their sisters' (i.e., paternal aunts) children, while women encouraged their children to marry their brothers (i.e., maternal uncles) children. Further, the best possible arranged marriages were those between two brothers from one family and two sisters from

[91] Marcel Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West*, vol. 1, Aboriginal Education Collection (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1986), 259.

another family.[92] These marriages, brother and sister to sister and brother, followed Indigenous marriage practices that closely connected families.[93] Research into the kinship systems of Indigenous groups in North America reveals that cross-cousin marriages created tightly formed social groups by linking smaller bands or communities; maintaining those relationships over generations. For example, this practice was seen in the Naskapi of Labrador and within Ojibwe communities.[94] This was common practice on the plains, as a cousin was not seen as a "blood relation" in this situation, such as a brother or sister, thus making it a suitable option for marriage.[95] These marriages strengthened relations between Métis families, creating a network of familial support, and are seen in multiple ways in the Dumont family.

The Dumont and Laframboise families demonstrate several cross-cousin marriages. Ska-kas-ta-ow and Ekapow's marriages to sisters Marguerite and Louise Laframboise, and Cecile's marriage to Leblanc Laframboise, created three cross-cousin marriages within the first generation (see fig. 2).[96] The Dumont family repeated this pattern of marriages to strengthen the link between the two families in future generations. Isidore Berger, grandson of Cecile Laframboise (née Dumont), married Domitilde Laframboise in 1873 (see fig. 5).[97] Joseph Dumont (b. 1872), grandson of Ekapow and son of Isidore and Judith (Parenteau) Dumont, married Marie Rose Laframboise. His sister, Marie Virginie, also married a Laframboise—Edouard—in 1886 (see fig. 6).[98] These marriages demonstrate the Métis Laframboise family's acceptance of the Dumonts

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[92] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 70.
[93] M. Rossignol, "Cross-Cousin Marriage among the Saskatchewan Cree," *Primitive Man* 11, no. 1/2 (1938): 26–28, https://doi.org/10.2307/3316200; Regina Flannery, "Cross-Cousin Marriage among the Cree and Montagnais of James Bay," *Primitive Man* 11, no. 1/2 (1938): 29–33, https://doi.org/10.2307/3316201; Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 70.
[94] DeMallie refers to the research done by individuals such as William Duncan Strong on the norther Naskapi of Labrador in 1929 and A. Irving Hallowell's sources for Ojibwe kinship and his examples in the Berens River Ojibwe. DeMallie, "Kinship: The Foundation for Native American Society," 317.
[95] Rossignol, "Cross-Cousin Marriage among the Saskatchewan Cree," 28.
[96] Morin, "Descendancy Chart Jean Baptiste Dumont-3693"; Gail Morin, "Family Group 1048 (Jean Baptiste Dumont)" (n.d.), Gail Morin Genealogy Database, Glenbow Archives.
[97] Macdougall and St-Onge provide a detailed exploration of the way these marriages were alliances, Brenda MacDougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades," in *The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories*, ed. Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 89–113; Morin. "Descendancy Chart Jean Baptiste Dumont-3693."
[98] Morin.

and a continued selection of spouses that strengthened the bond between the families. These multiple links between the Berger, Laframboise and Dumont families created allied families that allowed them to merge the knowledge of their family's region to produce a strong Métis influence.

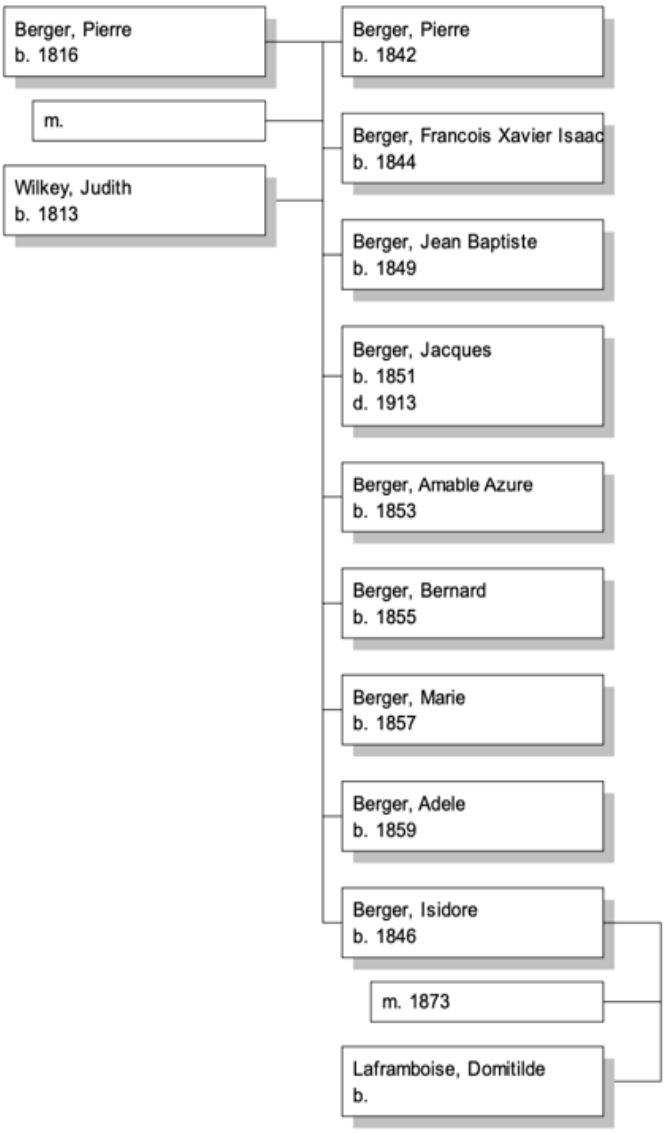

Figure 5 Dumont family marriages to Laframboise and Berger families

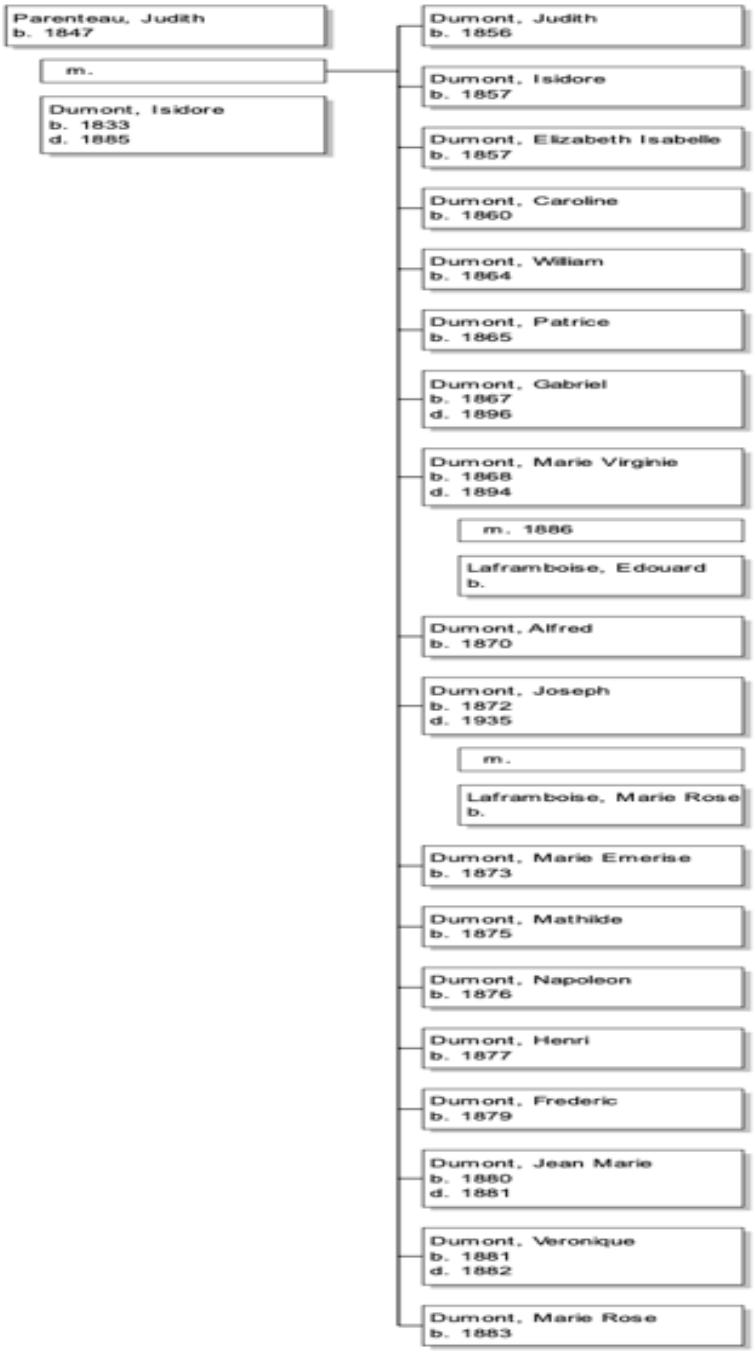

Figure 6 Dumont and Laframboise Marriages

The Laframboise family was not the only family with which the Dumonts practised cross-cousin marriages. The Dumonts and Parenteaus also aligned in this way through the relationships of the second generation of Dumont children. As mentioned above, Ekapow and Louise's children, Isidore Dumont (b. 1833) married Judith Parenteau and Pelagie Dumont (b. 1835)

married Jean Baptiste Parenteau.[99] While not a cross-cousin marriage, Judith Plante, granddaughter of Nampesh and Suzanne, married Isidore Parenteau (b. 1852) in 1870, furthering the connection between the two families.[100] The repetition of this arrangement confirms that the Dumont family not only married into Métis families, which facilitated their adoption of Métis identity, but they also often chose marriage partners that allowed a single generation to join another family through multiple marriages, creating a strong bond of support and alliance. These cross-cousin marriages into established Métis families, enmeshed the Dumonts deeply into the emerging Métis nation and were a vital part of their maintenance of a Métis identity through generations.

The last pattern seen in connection to marriage is that the women took their husbands' surnames, creating a long patronymic legacy within the Métis Nation, with specific names becoming unique to certain Métis communities.[101] This was not unique to the Métis. It was common practice for French and French-Canadian families, but it was also consistently practised within the Métis, perhaps adopted from their Euro-Canadian ancestors. Brenda Macdougall's genealogical research on Métis families in Sakitawak reveals how certain names created legacies in specific communities, and that the surnames (or in some cases lack of them) elucidates the cultural identity of the region.[102] In Sakitawak, thirty-four of the forty-three core families that Macdougall identifies demonstrate that "French, Scottish, and English surnames became the core of the region's patronymic legacy;" linking families to place.[103] Macdougall's recognition of this patronymic pattern of surnames allows us to examine the Dumont family to recognize the similar adoption of the husband's name in marriage. Where Macdougall uses these patterns to connect families to community, we can instead see how the marriages to Métis spouses, and the adoption of the husband's surname demonstrates the continuation of this pattern as a symbol of Métis identity. However, as Macdougall mentions, it can be at times difficult to trace these patterns through the records because these family names did not always maintain the same spelling and some individuals also used nicknames, which can make connecting family members difficult.[104]

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[99] Morin.
[100] Morin.
[101] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 73–74.
[102] Macdougall, 74.
[103] Macdougall, 74–75.
[104] Macdougall, 76–77.

For instance, colonial agents often recorded the Dumont family as "Dumond."[105] The 1871–72 Census recorded all the Dumont heads of households as "Dumond" and listed many of their Indigenous names, such as "dit. Ecapor."[106] The addition of Ecapor (Ekapow) is evidence that this is the Dumont family. Despite the confusion that these numerous spellings and alternative names create genealogically, the patronymic legacy is seen in the Dumont family, and the continuation of and emphasis on family surnames was a mean of expressing Métis identity through a shared social and cultural understanding that connected an extended kinship network over the expanse of the Métis homelands.

Taken together we see the ways in which the Dumont family's decisions regarding marriages stepped them away from their ancestors' cultures and into Métis families. Their potential marriage partners were dictated by the context of the northwest, where the fur trade had changed the social and economic landscape. Naming practices and marriage patterns both provide evidence of the family's Métis identity through the first generations in the northwest.

KAA OOPIKIHTAMASHOOK AKWA LII ZAAFA- ADOPTION OF CHILDREN

Like you look at Indigenous societies to look at Métis, lots of adoption going on very little emphasis on [blood] ancestry and descent.

Jonas Weselake-George-Métis Research Partner[107]

Thus far, this chapter has explored the Dumont family's Métis identity by means of kinship through marriage. Through these marriages we see the Dumont children joining into Métis families aiding in their adoption and maintenance of a Métis identity creating a dense network of Métis familial support. The Dumonts' understanding of Métis kinship was expressed through these marriage choices and patterns, as well as how they related to others in ways that aligned with wahkootowin. As Jonas Weselake-George remarked in our interview, adoption was

[105] For instance, in the 1871–72 Census, the Dumont family is recorded by head of household (which includes both male and female names), but all are recorded as "Dumond." For the eldest generation, their Indigenous name is also noted. "Census 1871–1872," 72 1871, M477, Glenbow Archives; Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 74.
[106] "Census 1871–1872."
[107] Jonas Weselake-George, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, December 21, 2019.

a common practice within Métis society, demonstrating that being family was not about blood ancestry, rather it was about becoming family and taking care of those who needed a home, a way of practicing the Métis understanding of wahkootowin. As Weselake-George's comment demonstrates, this understanding of wahkootowin has been maintained through generations. Brenda Macdougall links marriages and adoption in the Métis community of Sakitawak. She notes that wahkootowin needed to "expand the boundaries of family by bringing additional people into the group, thereby increasing as much as possible the total number of relatives an individual could look to for support, an ethos essential to survival…."[108] Indigenous understandings of family were guided by wahkootowin and recognized that people could become relations through more than just blood or marriage.[109]

Customary adoption describes the ways in which Indigenous nations adopted people into their community as family, a practice rooted in their collective worldview that places the community as priority over the individual. Further, research on Indigenous cultures shows a dense network of relationships created through multi-layered bonds sharing the obligations of mutual aid and creating a safety net for individuals. Adoption is one way in which this safety net is enacted.[110] Adoption practices have existed since time immemorial and practiced for many reasons including "caring for children whose parents had died; providing children for couples who could not have their own; replacing a child lost to death, providing a child to elderly relatives who needed support, etc."[111] The practice of adoption strengthened rather than undermined a child's relationships and the adoption was usually publicly known, even celebrated through ceremony in some Indigenous cultures.[112]As such, adoption was one way in which Métis people fulfilled their kinship responsibilities, as it prevented children who had lost their parents from leaving Métis communities. Keeping these children within Métis families was important as they inherited the culture and helped preserve the family and its Métis identity.[113] However,

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[108] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 81.
[109] Macdougall, 9–10.
[110] "Adoption Practices: First Nation Perspective.," in *Aski Awasis : First Peoples Speak about Adoption*, by Jeannine Carriere and Atkinson Grace (FNW: Fernwood Publishing, 2010), 46, https://canadacommons-ca.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/artifacts/1875752/aski-awasis/2624751/.
[111] "Adoption Practices: First Nation Perspective.," 47.
[112] "Adoption Practices: First Nation Perspective.," 47.
[113] Macdougall, 82.

records do not show Métis society celebrating customary adoption through formal ceremonies. Possibly, because often it was adoption of individuals they had existing relationships with, it was a less formal introduction, though details on this in the historical context are not available.[114]

Wahkootowin allowed for the Métis practice of internal and external adoptions. External adoptions allowed Métis families and communities to bring in individuals who did not identify as Métis. That individual through adoption would often take on Métis identity, sharing the culture, way of life, and responsibility to other community members. For example, Peter Erasmus, most well known as the interpreter for Treaty 6, adopted a Peigan boy, Peter Shirt, who had lost all his relatives. With the boy's community's blessing Erasmus adopted and raised him as family. Peter Shirt demonstrated his responsibility to family as he grew older taking on the responsibility of the family when Erasmus was away and leadership positions within the community.[115] This example of an external adoption demonstrates the role that adoption has in Métis identity.

Internal adoptions following the tenets of wahkootowin relied on Métis family members to care for children who had no direct family left. In doing so, the adopted family ensured these children continued their Métis identity. The Dumont family members practised adoption in several instances, including Gabriel Dumont and Madeleine Wilkie, who had no biological children. Madeleine and Gabriel raised several children, however, two—Veronique and Alexandre—are most well-known from the available records. Oral family stories indicate that the couple also took in children in more informal and short-term situations. With up to three or four children in their care at a time, the couple helped raise over thirty children. For example, Madeleine was a foster mother for one of Tatankanaje's (Chief White Cap) daughters shortly after her marriage to Gabriel, a sign of their close relationship with the Dakota Chief.[116] Thompson also describes adoption in Métis and First Nations communities as being a mutual decision where the children could choose to adopt an adult to care for them or vice versa. This at times could look more like the practice of apprenticeship, a child deciding they wanted to learn

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[114] Krystl Raven, "Ka Oopikihtamashook': Becoming Family," *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 14, no. 4 (2018): 321, https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180118821170.
[115] Raven, 322–23.
[116] Tatankanaje is also known as Chief White Cap (Dakota) and had a close relationship with the Dumonts. Thompson's source for this is an individual called Rouge Ochre. Thompson, 62; Welsh and Weekes, *The Last Buffalo Hunter*, 160.

from someone they admired and move in with that person becoming a family member and having access to that mentor's time and possessions.[117] Gabriel himself is said to have had a close relationship with Jean-Baptiste Wilkie, his father-in-law, through an apprenticeship at a young age. Thompson states this apprenticeship emerged because Wilkie was attracted to Gabriel's ability to call the buffalo, a rare talent.[118] However, Alexandre and Veronique, both related to the couple by blood, lived with Gabriel and Madeleine until they were adults, a relationship that seems to have extended beyond that of an apprenticeship. Grounded in Métis kinship practices, lifelong reciprocal kinship responsibilities also existed between the couple and Veronique and Alexandre.

It is often difficult to find written evidence of adopted children. As with many parts of Métis history, archival evidence is only available in areas where their lives were recorded, while family stories help to fill in the blanks. However, definitive proof is not always available. For instance, not all family members believe that Veronique lived with Gabriel and Madeleine. We do know that Veronique was born and baptized on April 17, 1864, in St. Albert. She was the daughter of Gabriel's cousins Jacques and Marie Anne "Annie" Bruneau.[119] In 1870 as smallpox swept across the northwest and through many Métis communities, Veronique's entire family died from the disease.[120] Parentless, Veronique spent several years at the Grey Nuns orphanage before

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[117] Thompson refers to adoption here more like an apprenticeship in some contexts. Thompson, 16, 257.
[118] Information provided to Thompson in interview with Jawbone, Tsuu T'ina (1944). Thompson, 16.
[119] Gail Morin, "Individual Summary Veronique Dumont (Hamilton) 22023" (n.d.), Gail Morin Genealogy Database, Glenbow Archives; Gail Morin, "Family Group Sheet 7182 Veronique Dumont (Hamilton)" (n.d.), Gail Morin Genealogy Database, Glenbow Archives; Gail Morin, "Descendancy Chart Veronique Hamilton (Dumont) 22023" (n.d.), Gail Morin Genealogy Database, Glenbow Archives; W. Lloyd Hamilton, "Typed Notes on Family of Veronique Dumont (Hamilton) from Lloyd Hamilton and Charles Denney?" (n.d.), M7144 file 216,000 Dumont, Jean Baptiste, Glenbow Archives; "Certificate of Birth and Baptism Veronique Dumont," September 11, 1873, M7144 Sundry Dumont, Glenbow Archives.
[120] Thompson cites C. Kipling's research for the description of Veronique's family members lost to smallpox. Thompson, *Red Sun*, 81.

being adopted in the mid-1870s, most likely by Gabriel and Madeleine who would have been in their mid-thirties.[121]

There is disagreement on whether it was, in fact, Gabriel and Madeleine who took her in. In the mid-twentieth century, Veronique's grandson, Lloyd Hamilton, began conversing with archivist and genealogist Charles Denney. Hamilton had grown up with stories of Veronique living with Gabriel and Madeleine, passed down from his father, but he questioned whether the information was accurate. He was particularly unsure about the stories of her working as a nurse during the 1885 Resistance, insisting to Denney that "flimsy evidence leads to speculation which may get out of hand."[122] Denney had done considerable research on the Dumont family, but was not "any closer to the answers" [123] Hamilton sought. Denney provided some information on Veronique, including evidence that Nampesh (Gabriel Sr.) was her grandfather, and points out that Antoine Dumont had signed her baptism record as her sponsor. Unable to find evidence of who Antoine Dumont was or how he was related to the Dumonts other than by name, Denney felt that if Veronique had needed a home, Antoine Dumont, or her grandfather Nampesh (Gabriel Sr.), were more obvious choices.[124]

These conversations between Hamilton and Denney from the early 1970s are preserved in the Glenbow archives[125] and were read by other family members. Some were swayed by

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[121] Morin, "Individual Summary Veronique Dumont (Hamilton) 22023"; Morin, "Family Group Sheet 7182 Veronique Dumont (Hamilton)"; Morin, "Descendancy Chart Veronique Hamilton (Dumont) 22023"; Hamilton, "Typed Notes on Family of Veronique Dumont (Hamilton) from Lloyd Hamilton and Charles Denney?"; "Certificate of Birth and Baptism Veronique Dumont."
[122] W. Lloyd Hamilton, "Letter W. Lloyd Hamilton to Charles Denney Re Veronique and Family History July 19, 1974" (July 19, 1974), M7144 file 216,000 Dumont, Jean Baptiste, Glenbow Archives.
[123] "Letter from Charles Denney to Lloyd Hamilton Re Veronique Dumont June 22, 1974" (June 22, 1974), Geoff Burtonshaw Fonds, Glenbow Archives.
[124] "Letter from Charles Denney to Lloyd Hamilton Re Veronique Dumont June 22, 1974."
[125] W. Lloyd Hamilton, "(Copy) To Manitoba Provincial Archivist by Lloyd Hamilton" (June 4, 1973), M7144 Sundry Dumont, Glenbow Archives; W. Lloyd Hamilton, "Letter from Lloyd Hamilton to Roman Catholic Church Re Veronique Hamilton (Dumont) January 1 1974" (January 1, 1974), M7144 file 216,000 Dumont, Jean Baptiste, Glenbow Archives; W. Lloyd Hamilton, "Letter to Dr Drouin OMI Archivist Oblate Archives from Lloyd Hamilton" (January 23, 1974), M7144 file 216,000 Dumont, Jean Baptiste, Glenbow Archives; Hamilton, "Typed Notes on Family of Veronique Dumont (Hamilton) from Lloyd Hamilton and Charles Denney?"; Morin, "Family Group Sheet 7182 Veronique Dumont (Hamilton)"; C MacKinnon, "Letter C.

Denney's concerns and cite the letters as reasons for their belief that Veronique was not raised by Gabriel and Madeleine.[126] Yet, there is nothing in these letters that confirm which family member Veronique had lived with. The dates known and discussed by Denney do not eliminate the possibility that the couple had taken Veronique in. In addition, the couple was known for taking in children, and the fact that they were relatively young and had no biological children made it more feasible for them to care for Veronique than Nampesh, who had twelve children and was in his senior years at the time.[127] In addition, other sources that have more recently become publicly available strengthen the argument that Veronique lived with the couple. Charles Thompson spent decades talking to Dumont relatives and numerous stories of Gabriel, Madeleine, Veronique, and Alexandre's lives together are recorded in his book *Red Sun: Gabriel Dumont the Folk Hero*.[128] When weighed against Denney's interpretation of the archival information, the family knowledge recorded by Thompson provides strong evidence that Gabriel and Madeleine were the ones who adopted Veronique. It is easy to let the conversation of whether they did or did not adopt Veronique overpower the more important conversation of how adoption worked within Métis families and, more specifically, within the Dumont family. Veronique's descendants who sought to confirm her life with Gabriel and Madeleine have done so through kinship responsibility. They are ensuring that they do not promote information without sufficient evidence or knowledge to confirm it. Furthermore, owing to Gabriel's fame within the Métis Nation, to claim direct relation to him as a descendent through Veronique when one is not sure whether that information is correct would be wrong. Their attempts to confirm this information can thus be seen as a kinship responsibility in which they seek the truth to prevent further falsehoods being spread about their family. Additionally, this example demonstrates clearly why tracing adoptions can be difficult due to a lack of record through easily accessible documents such as birth, baptism, and scrip records.

Gabriel and Madeleine treated Veronique and Alexandre as their own children, and the relationship, which aligned with the concept of wahkootowin, was lifelong. Wahkootowin

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Mackinnon to W. Lloyd Hamilton 18 September 1973," September 18, 1973, M7144 Sundry Dumont, Glenbow Archives.

[126] Paul Campeau, email message to author, February 15, 2018.

[127] Morin, "Descendancy Charts of Jean Baptiste Dumont 3693."

[128] Thompson, *Red Sun.*

acknowledges the reciprocal relationships, responsibilities, and obligations between relatives, and adoption was a way of fulfilling these responsibilities and obligations to one another. The responsibility toward children was great, because they were the future of the nation and, therefore, most treasured.[129] Additionally, by taking in the children Gabriel and Madeleine were living up to their responsibilities to their relatives who had passed away leaving these children needing a home. Thus, protecting the youth was important to Métis families, and adoption was a way to accomplish this. In return, children such as Alexandre and Veronique brought their own strengths to their adoptive family. Exploring the relationship between Gabriel, Madeleine, Veronique, and Alexandre allows us to see the Dumont family's Métis understanding of kinship responsibilities in action.

Veronique joined the Dumont couple shortly after they settled in St. Laurent de Grandin. Many changes were happening on the plains at this point. The Red River Resistance,[130] led by Louis Riel, gained some traction towards Métis rights with the Manitoba Act and the promise of scrip for land in 1870. Treaties were being signed with First Nations communities to allow the Canadian government access to the northwest for settlement. Life on the plains was changing, and many Métis families chose to establish more permanent housing. This was an adjustment for Gabriel and Madeleine who had not lived such a settled lifestyle in their marriage. When Gabriel, Madeleine and the children settled at Gabriel's Crossing to establish a ferry and store, Gabriel also attempted farming. It was a risky venture. Despite his earnest attempts he had little success with his crops. Gabriel endeavoured to plant several crops including Lagimodiére watermelon, a popular treat from his childhood.[131] However, as strong as Gabriel's talents as a buffalo hunter were, he did not have the experience or natural talent for farming. Based on his skills alone,

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[129] Anna Flaminio, "Gladue through Wahkotowin: Social History through Cree Kinship Lens in Corrections and Parole" (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, University of Saskatchewan, 2013), 16-17, https://harvest.usask.ca/handle/10388/ETD-2013-03-1039.

[130] The Red River Resistance took place between the Métis residents of the Assiniboia region and the Canadian government. In this resistance, the democratically elected Métis provisional government acted as the temporary government for the region after the transfer of Rupert's Land to the Dominion of Canada. The result of this resistance was the creation of the Province of Manitoba.

[131] Watermelons had been on the prairies since about 1800s. Thompson, *Red Sun*, 97.

farming was not going to be successful enough to support the family.[132] This struggle was not unusual. Many Métis hunters, traders, and merchants in this period struggled to shift to the agricultural environment that required different knowledge bases than their former livelihoods.[133] In St. Laurent de Grandin several individuals were dedicated farmers by 1881 (Gilbert Breland, Jean-Baptiste and William Boyer, Gabriel Dumont, Charles Carrière, and Isidore Villeneuve) but that skill took some time to develop.[134] Through the 1870s farming was not a main economic opportunity, rather it complemented other occupations, meaning they were often absent from their farms in this period for months at a time.[135] Family stories show that Gabriel's crops only thrived after he turned to Veronique and Alexandre for assistance.[136]

Children's participation in family farming was not unusual, but their expertise over their parents was. Brenda Macdougall discusses the family's roles in seasonal activities such as harvesting. She argues that group labour by women and children in the Métis at Sakitawak "followed older Cree and Dene cultural patterns" where women working alongside children used it as an opportunity to teach skills to the next generation.[137] However, in this instance, it seems the roles have been reversed. Here the children educated their adoptive parents in more effective farming skills. Possibly Veronique and Alexandre had learned farming with their birth families, or Veronique in her years with the Grey Nuns before joining Gabriel and Madeleine. The family needed to come together to support each other and share knowledge, and this meant that Gabriel had to be humble enough to accept the knowledge from his children. It is also likely that Gabriel turned to his father, Ekapow, for advice. Ekapow and Louise had farmed in Red River earlier, and mission records show by 1879 Ekapow was successfully farming in St. Laurent.[138] As such, this family economy characterised Métis life, and it was a lived experience of wahkootowin, as it

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[132] Some of this information was told to Thompson by Charlie Trottier dit Tripoos (1946). Thompson, 97.
[133] St-Onge and Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web," 78.
[134] Diane P. Payment, *The Free People - Li Gens Libres: A History of the Métis Community of Batoche, Saskatchewan* (UCP: University of Calgary Press, 2009), 186, https://canadacommons-ca.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/artifacts/1874295/the-free-people/2623471/.
[135] Payment, 186.
[136] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 97.
[137] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 166.
[138] Payment, *The Free People - Li Gens Libres*, 187.

contained a "cultural ideal of solidarity through shared socio-economic activities."[139] Economic security depended on mutual support between parents and children—regardless of whether they were blood related or adopted. Everyone was a vital part of the family's survival, and these cultural and economic endeavors were intertwined bringing together a shared sense of identity and community for the Dumont family.

Survival was also a family affair during times of turmoil, such as the 1885 North West Resistance.[140] This Resistance culminated in armed battles between the Métis of Batoche area and the Canadian Government after the Métis repeatedly petitioned for confirmation to their rights. Women and youth were not silent bystanders in the events but played an active part. Wahkootowin connects Métis people from the individual to the broader community—harm to one is harm to all—and their actions during these periods strengthened their ties to other Métis families. Therefore, Veronique and Alexandre, who had close kinship ties and a sense of responsibility to their adopted parents, were also connected to the broader community and "their persistence and pride ensured that Batoche remained a Métis community."[141] Veronique and Alexandre were young adults[142] at the time of the Resistance and were interested in Métis political activities. Alexandre and Veronique kept up on the Métis meetings that led up to the clash with the Dominion Government and worked to supply the trenches during the battles.[143]

Diane Payment's research about women's role in the Resistance provides some context to the evidence of Veronique's activities during this event.[144] The historical narrative has often undervalued the important roles that Métis women had within realms that are often viewed by a

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[139] Macdougall, 166.
[140] The North West Resistance of 1885 is described further in the chapter Nutre Chef.
[141] Diane Paulette Payment, "'La Vie En Rose'? Métis Women at Batoche, 1870 to 1920." In *Women of the First Nations: Power, Wisdom, and Strength,* ed. Christine Miller and Patricia Chuchryk (University of Manitoba Press, 1996), 20.
[142] Veronique was born in 1864 and was turning twenty-one years old during the 1885 North West Resistance. Gail Morin, "Pedigree Chart #2 Veronique Dumont (Hamilton) 22023" (n.d.), Gail Morin Genealogy Database, Glenbow Archives.
[143] Payment, "'La Vie En Rose'?" 26–27; Information given to Thompson by Elie Dumont who heard of this information as well Thompson heard the same information from Four Souls (1979). Thompson, *Red Sun*, 151.
[144] Payment, "'La Vie En Rose'?"

euro-western patriarchal lens as male dominated.[145] Payment demonstrates that the women in Batoche were aware of the issues at hand, and as the men took up arms the women prayed that fighting would not break out.[146] Payment records that the Métis women were not silent about their opinions, openly voicing their views even when it did not align with their father or husband's.[147] These recollections of women's collective and individual voices gives some insight into the gender roles within the Métis communities. Further, women's vocal participation in community decision making process is not unusual. Max Hamon discusses women's voices in the public sphere a decade earlier in Red River, noting that women frequently criticized male Métis leaders.[148] Despite women's opinions regarding violence, when the threat was real, the women, elders, and children left the settlement to a large camp on the east side of the river where they joined some First Nations families; staying in tents or dug outs for protection of themselves and their essential household articles. Here women and children took care of the community, slaughtering animals to cook and feeding those who were not on the battlefield.[149]

Veronique pitched in, helping Madeleine and the elderly Marie (Hallet) Letendre as they cared for the wounded and sick in the village.[150] The end of the Resistance saw women, children, and the elders fleeing from the camp, abandoning everything behind and leading to days of fear as the military burned down homes between Batoche and St. Laurent de Grandin.[151] Veronique and Madeleine were part of this group fleeing for their safety. It is not clear where Alexandre was during the battles, but it can be assumed he was fighting alongside Gabriel. For his part, Gabriel ensured the safety of his family; after leading the Métis in the battles where he worked to protect the safety and rights of the community (the only role the Canadian state would recognize him for)

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[145] Émilie Pigeon and Carolyn Podruchny, "Bannock Diplomacy: How Métis Women Fought Battles and Made Peace in North Dakota, 1850s–1870s," *Ethnohistory* 69, no. 1 (January 1, 2022): 32, https://doi.org/10.1215/00141801-9404136.
[146] Payment, "'La Vie En Rose'?" 26.
[147] Payment, 26.
[148] Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise*, 179.
[149] Payment, "'La Vie En Rose'?" 26–27.
[150] Payment, 27; Hamilton, "Letter W. Lloyd Hamilton to Charles Denney Re Veronique and Family History July 19 1974"; Thompson refers to Madeleine as a medicine woman although he does not cite any information as to why he refers to her this way. Thompson, *Red Sun*, 145.
[151] Payment, "'La Vie En Rose'?" 28.

Gabriel would focus on his responsibility to his family.[152] Gabriel confirmed that both children were safe with Madeleine until they could escape across the border as a family.[153] Once across the border, Madeleine and Veronique stayed with relatives, while Alexandre remained with Gabriel to provide him with support as he healed from his injuries.[154] By fighting and supporting the 1885 Resistance effort, the Dumont family—Gabriel, Madeleine, Veronique, and Alexandre—supported each other and the community, which reaffirms they upheld Métis kinship responsibilities. By 1886, Veronique moved back north and married William Hamilton, while Alexandre remained in the United States.[155] The family remained in contact, continuing to support one another through their lifetimes, because Métis kinship responsibilities did not end when children became adults and moved away.

The relationships between the family members were strong, and all parties worked hard to maintain their family and cultural bonds, despite distance and even danger. Madeleine made a wedding dress for Veronique's wedding but was ultimately unable to attend the nuptials, having fallen ill and passing away that same year. Gabriel embarked on one of his secretive trips north for the wedding, and he was touched to see the daughter he raised as his own be married.[156] In the years that followed, Gabriel remained in contact with Veronique and her new family, returning to

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[152] The Canadian State only recognized Gabriel as a military leader, their understandings of masculinity limited by their patriarchal Euro-Canadian lens. This is not a true representation of Métis masculinity as Gabriel's actions go much further than just a military leader. Hokowhitu, "Producing Elite Indigenous Masculinities," 36; Macdougall, *One of the Family.*

[153] Gabriel Dumont, "Gabriel Dumont's Account of the North West Rebellion, 1885," trans. George F.G. Stanley, *The Canadian Historical Review* 30, no. 3 (1949): 249–69, https://doi.org/10.3138/CHR-030-03-03, 267-269.

[154] Thompson, 151, 215.

[155] Veronique's marriage date is listed as 1888 by Gail Morin and Charles Thompson, Charles Denney notes 1886 but that it could have been anytime between 1886 and 1888. I have used the earlier date here because it appears she had moved to the Edmonton area in 1885 as received scrip there at that time. "Scrip Veronique Dumont" (July 1, 1885), RG 15 v. 1327, Library and Archives Canada;"Pedigree Chart #2 Veronique Dumont (Hamilton) 22023"; As told to Thompson by George Thompson, grandson of Veronique Thompson, *Red Sun,* 235; W. Lloyd Hamilton, "Letter from Lloyd Hamilton to Roman Catholic Church Re Veronique Hamilton (Dumont) January 1, 1974" (January 1, 1974), M7144 file 216,000 Dumont, Jean Baptiste, Glenbow Archives.

[156] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 219–20.

the Edmonton area to welcome his grandson George into the world in 1888.[157] Thus, while Veronique and Alexandre left Gabriel and Madeleine's household to create their own families, the family's bond did not end. Veronique's family also had close attachments, as shown by Lloyd Hamilton's letters and inquiries into her life. Alexandre, however, disappears from the records and little is known about his remaining years. While Veronique and Alexandre were not the only children the couple adopted, the stories of their lives together elucidate how adoption ensured that these two children remained in a Métis home, and how, by bringing them into their home, Gabriel and Madeleine gained two close family members who supported the couple and the broader Métis community. These adoptions, done through Métis understandings of kinship helped maintain the Métis identity of the children, while also demonstrating the couple's Métis kinship responsibilities.

Gabriel and Madeleine were not the only Dumonts to practise adoption. Jean Dumont III, born in 1833 at Red River and baptised in St. Boniface, and Edouard Assiniboine, born in 1847, were both adopted by Ska-kas-ta-ow and his wife, Marguerite Laframboise, who had previously been married to Henry Fisher.[158] Ekapow himself adopted children with his subsequent marriages after his first wife, Louise, passed away.[159] Ka oopikihtamashook akwa lii zaafa was not unusual within Métis families,[160] and within the first generations on the prairies, the Dumont family practised adoption demonstrating their Métis identity and understanding of kinship responsibility.

CONCLUSION

Kinship, in both marriages and adoption, was integral to the Dumont family's development and maintenance of a Métis identity. Jean-Baptiste's decision to remain on the plains allowed him and Josephte to raise their children in a way that did not completely enculturate them into the Tsuut'ina or Euro-Canadian cultures. Instead, these children grew up and joined the buffalo hunt, ultimately finding marriage partners through their families'

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[157] Thompson describes George as Gabriel's first grandson, but Gail Morin lists George as the second born son, William Lloyd Hamilton being born 1885 and dying 1889. Gail Morin, "Descendancy Chart Veronique Hamilton (Dumont) 22023" (n.d.), Gail Morin Genealogy Database, Glenbow Archives.
[158] Denney, Charles, "Genealogical Chart of Jean Baptiste Dumont and Marguerite Laframboise 216 250."
[159] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 72.
[160] Raven, "Ka Oopikihtamashook'."

livelihoods. The Dumont family's marriages led them to join Métis families and reproduce common Métis marriage patterns.

While the academic exploration of a particular family's Métis identity is not unique, the Dumont family demonstrates how patterns common to Métis families in this period occur with variations accounting to each family's unique story. Historian Heather Devine's research on the Desjarlais family reveals continued connections to Euro-Canadian values and peoples through working and living near the fur-trade forts. She argues that this was an important survival mechanism by means of kinship ties to nearby Indigenous groups.[161] However, this is not apparent in the history of the Dumont family. Rather, it was their connections to other Métis families and hunting brigades that ensured their success.

Kinship and the Dumont family also reveals insight into the gender roles within these generations of the family. The importance of Métis women in connecting the Dumonts through marriage to Métis families and communities was shown as integral to their Métis identity. Additionally, gender norms were demonstrated within this context, including how Métis women at times lacked agency in their choice of spouse, men receiving multiple names,[162] and men positioned as the protectors of the family and community. These gender roles were shaped by wahkootowin as well as the interaction with the Euro-centric values embedded in the fur trade system these Métis communities formed around.

Furthermore, this chapter has shown that kinship was integral to historical Métis identity. The Dumont family's marriages connected them to other Métis families through multiple ties, through which they gained the necessary support for success on the plains without relying on their Euro-Canadian relatives. Their decisions regarding kinship, including adoption, depicts a family whose lives followed principles that aligned with wahkootowin. Wahkootowin reaches beyond marriage and adoption, and the actions that align with this concept are explored in the

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[161] Devine, *People Who Own Themselves*, 91.
[162] This practice of multiple names for men only is discussed by LaRoque, Emma LaRoque, "Metis and Feminist: Contemplations on Feminism, Human Rights, Culture and Decolonization," in *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism, 2nd Edition*, ed. Joyce Green (Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2020), 173–204.

following chapters. Kinship was integral to the Dumonts becoming Métis. Marriages connected them to several established Métis families and expanded their lives across the Métis homelands.

2- Nutr Tayr-Our Land

These settlements and territories, or homelands, begin from around Rainy Lake and go west to the foothills and south to the Missouri River, and North to the treeline.

Bruce Flamont- Métis Research Partner[1]

Bruce Flamont's comment reflects on the vastness of the Métis homelands, however, he also designates clear geographical boundaries to this territory. While the Métis of today do not live just within this territory, the land in which the Métis formed its identity is important, as geography shapes identity. This chapter focuses on the way the Dumont family experienced the Métis homeland, exploring how this one family adopted this vast area of land as their home. When Jean-Baptiste Dumont, a Franco-Canadien first travelled west for work he did not plan to stay there. Like many fur-trade men, he saw the east as his home and, in approximately 1802, he left his Tsuut'ina wife, Josephte, to return to Montreal. But, a few years later, Jean-Baptiste returned to the northwest and reconnected with Josephte, and this reunion resulted in the creation of a branch of the Dumont family living in and adopting the northwest as their home. After becoming a freeman, Jean-Baptiste and Josephte settled within the Saskatchewan District, an area centred between present-day Prince Albert, Battlefords, and Saskatoon in Saskatchewan (see fig. 8).[2] However, the family did not remain anchored to this region. The first generation of children established roots further east in Red River and west to Mânitow Sâkahikanihk (Lac Ste. Anne) and hunted south past Pembina following the buffalo ranges. As such, the first generations of the family spread across the Métis homelands incorporating these lands into their identity of home.

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[1] Bruce Flamont, "Genesis of the Michif," Thinking In Michif, thinkinginmichif.com.
[2] Charles Denney, "Handwritten Notes Re Jean Baptiste Dumont 216000" (1974), M7144 file 216,000 Dumont, Jean Baptiste, Glenbow Archives; Denney, Charles, "Handwritten Notes about First Generation of Dumont Family – 2 Pages" (1974), M7144 file 216,000 Dumont, Jean Baptiste, Glenbow Archives; Denney, "Handwritten Notes Re Jean Baptiste Dumont 216000."

Figure 7 The Métis Nation Boundaries (Manitoba Métis Federation)

The previous chapter, which discussed kinship in relation to the Dumont family, touched on the importance of geography to the emergence of the Métis. The northwest and its distance from major fur trade centres such as Montreal shaped the decisions of fur trade men and the relationships that they formed. While geography helped spark the ethnogenesis of the Métis, it also influenced the lives and culture of the Métis people.[3]

[3] Gerhard John Ens and Joe Sawchuk, *From New Peoples to New Nations: Aspects of Métis History and Identity from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2016), chap. 2.

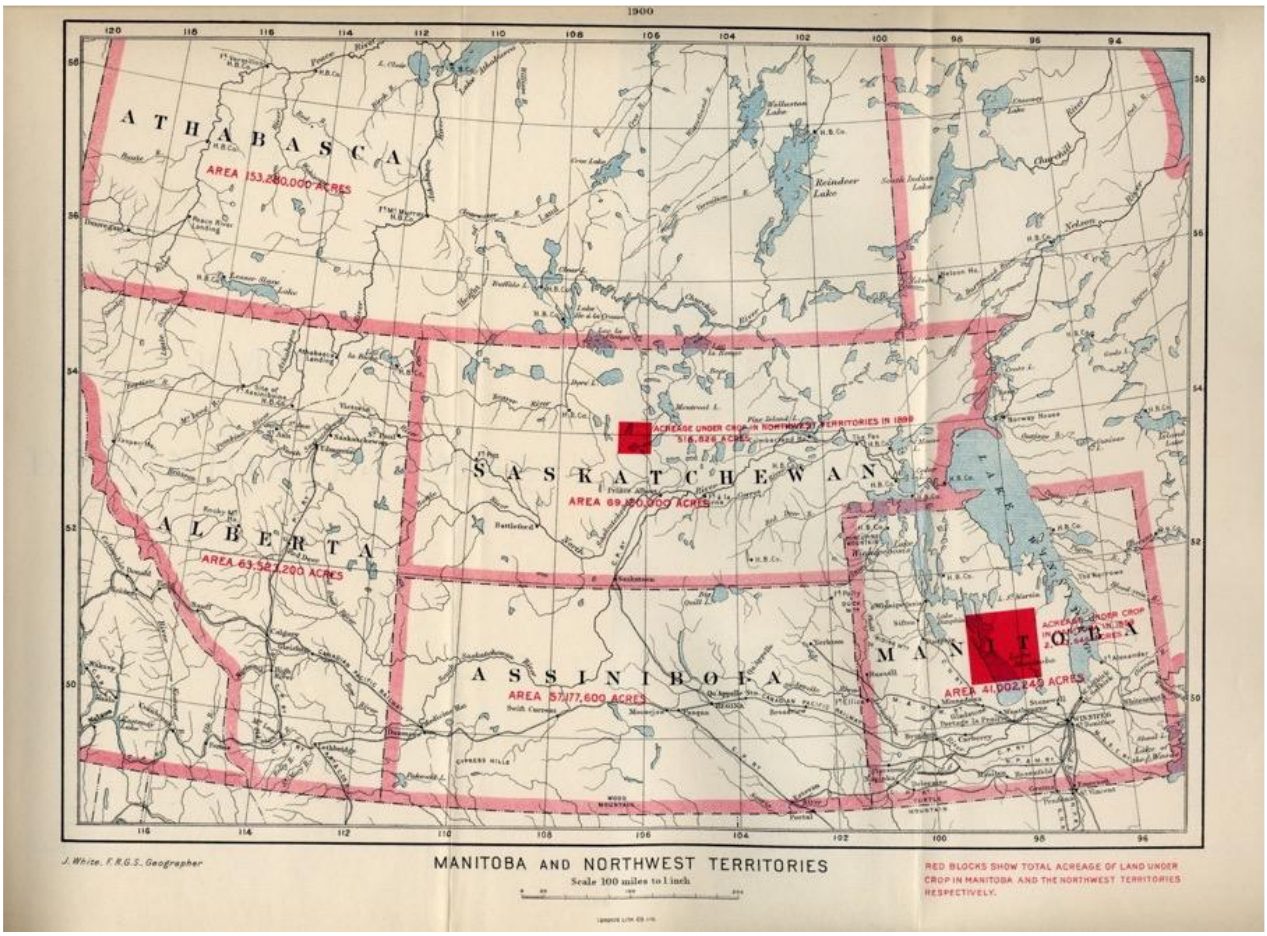

Figure 8 Saskatchewan District ca. 1900 University of Manitoba: Elizabeth Dafoe Library Map Collection

The Métis—as an Indigenous people— "define[d] themselves in terms of the homelands that sustained their ancestors. These are the places where their spiritual roots lie."[4] A homeland is a territory in which an apparent or felt symbiosis between community and place is experienced, that creates a sense of solidarity within a group's identity, making land a necessary aspect of identity in conjunction with a shared history and culture.[5] It is the process in which a space and territory is created through a peoples' identity and in which their identity is also formed in relation to the territory.[6] Thus, Métis identity involves a felt symbiosis between being Métis and

[4] Arthur J. Ray, *An Illustrated History of Canada's Native People: I Have Lived Here Since the World Began* (McGill-Queen's Press, 2011), 1.
[5] Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Reprint edition (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991), 25-28.
[6] Étienne Rivard, "'Le Fond de L'Oest' Territoriality, Oral Geographies and the Métis in the Nineteenth-Century Northwest," in *Contours of a People Metis Family, Mobility, and History*, ed. Nicole St-Onge, Carolyn Podruchny, and Brenda Macdougall (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 144, http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3571331.

the land, and Métis people are recognized by others as Métis not because of their mixed ancestry but because of their identity formed in connection to the northwest.[7] The Métis homelands are vast, encompassing the lands of their allied First Nations kin, expanding to incorporate most of the plains of the northwest through the aspects of life that spurred Métis ethnogenesis including kinship and livelihood. Métis conceptions of their homelands included the acknowledgement that their territory was also shared with others, Indigenous and later non-Indigenous.[8]

For many Métis, their lives were as mobile as they were settled. One of the challenges in the historical study of Métis land use is that most Métis families, including the Dumonts, appear most in historical records during the times when they lived in permanent settlements.[9] Some families moved between settled and mobile lifestyles within a short period of time, changing with the seasons, while others chose one lifestyle for an extended period. As buffalo-hunt people, some Métis spent more time on the prairies following the hunt than they did in settlements (semi-permanent or permanent). This lifestyle left little to no archival information, and while the Métis did create semi-permanent communities for wintering, more Métis-centred research is needed on these sites.[10] Therefore, archival records, such as census data, often do not reveal the movements and events that occurred between these settlements and alone cannot provide a complete visualization of how the Métis lived and moved within their territories. To develop a more thorough understanding of the Dumont family's movements and lives on the plains, I look beyond the archive to first-hand accounts, such as autobiographies, journals, and oral histories to fill the gaps. This chapter weaves together the threads of kinship, mobility, gender, and livelihood and argues that the Dumonts' understanding and use of the vast geographic area known as the Métis homelands shaped their Métis identity.

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[7] Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 28–29.
[8] Michel Hogue, Metis and the Medicine Line: Creating a Border and Dividing a People (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2015), 5.
[9] Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility: Metis Buffalo-Hunting Brigades," *Manitoba History*, no. 71 (2013): 21+.
[10] Haines discussed the numerous sites she has designated as possible Metis archaeological sites that are not labelled as such, as well as the problematic approach of past research on Métis wintering sites, calling for a Métis-centred approach to archaeological research. Emily Haines, "'Acculturation' and Erasure: Colonial Violence in the Archaeology of the Métis" (University of Alberta, November 26, 2021).

WAAHKOOMIWAYHK-KINSHIP

Métis communities grew up in multiple places at once in an interconnected network.

Jonas Weslake-George[11]

As Jonas Weselake-George comments, the Métis homeland did not start in just one community, spreading out in a wave, but rather through several groups of people (mobile and in settlements) across what becomes the Métis homelands, who found cohesion between themselves through kinship connections. These relationships, starting with the proto-generation emerged with a Métis identity influenced by the land and geography in which they existed. Marriage and other kinship responsibilities spread the Dumont family throughout the Métis homelands, the land shaping their Métis identity. As shown in the previous chapter, marriage connected the Dumont family to well-established Métis families aided in their maintaining a Métis identity, but these marriage choices also spread the Dumonts to other Métis communities—mobile and settled—from the Fort des Prairies (Fort Edmonton) area to Red River and south into what became Montana and North Dakota. Historian Jennifer Brown revealed the links between marriage, locality, and Métis ethnogenesis. For instance, she acknowledges that post contact subarctic Indigenous groups were typically matrilocal as the outsider husbands often lived, for a short period with their Indigenous wife's community.[12] It is this aspect that also aligns with Foster's discussion of the outsider male and his role within Métis ethnogenesis.[13] Brown calls to question whether women's economic roles, which encouraged this matrilocality stayed consistent through generations, or if patrilocality, as seen in some upper-level fur trade families, is evident in later generations of Métis families. Brown suggests that the discussion of locality and residence patterns may also expose a pattern described as unilocality by anthropologist Michael Asch. Unilocality is a tendency of the siblings of one gender (sisters or brothers) to remain with their parents once married, bringing either a patrilocal or matrilocal pattern into a family.[14] Brown suggests that family studies of at least three generations would allow subtle comparisons

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[11] Jonas Weselake-George, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 21, 2019.
[12] Jennifer S. H. Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities," *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3, no. 1 (1983): 40.
[13] John E Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis," *Prairie Forum* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 1–14.
[14] Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol," 42.

and explorations of the families' experiences, demonstrating the role of locality through marriage.[15] Brenda Macdougall argues that matrilocality was a key aspect (alongside patronymic connections) of the subarctic Métis society, with marriages allowing individuals to "Live in the lands of [their] mother" and to become associated with specific locations.[16] Macdougall notes that she defines matrilocal broadly, referring to women bringing men into a region and encouraging the men's long term residence by instilling beliefs and behaviors from the local culture.[17] Thus it is important to understand matrilocality as being multi-spatial rather than tied to one specific site. The Dumont family demonstrates the ways in which these patterns do not hold true for all families, with Josephte living away from her community with Jean-Baptiste (patrilocality) and their children demonstrating a pattern more aligned with unilocality as explored below.

Geography and time affected an individuals' opportunities regarding marriage and locality. Macdougall's work on Sakitawak is substantially further north than where the Dumont family lived. At Sakitawak, Macdougall notes that the early nineteenth century saw outsider males marrying first generation Métis women, and that the region was one that featured matrilocal residency.[18] Macdougall uses genealogical data to identify locality patterns within the district's core families' four generations. In doing so she asserts that matrilocal residency was essential to the emergence of the Métis. But also, gender altered the decisions made on the children of the district. For example, first generation women rarely left the region, as men had greater opportunities for mobility through the trading lifestyle.[19] By the second generation, the men remained in the region marking the areas with their last name, but Macdougall notes that the women framed the region as matrilocal while men provided patronyms to specific communities within the English River district.[20] Here, I explore marriages of the Dumont family in relation to the land, tracing how kinship connected and expanded the Dumont family to key areas of the

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[15] Brown, 41–45.
[16] Brenda Macdougall, *One of the Family: Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 95.
[17] Macdougall, 54.
[18] Macdougall, 67.
[19] Macdougall, 111–12.
[20] Macdougall, 112.

Métis homelands within the first three generations, while also highlighting the appearance, or lack, of the locality patterns described by Brown and Macdougall.

Jean-Baptiste and Josephte first lived at Fort des Prairies, the centre point of the fur trade for the Saskatchewan District. As discussed in the previous chapter, the relationship of Jean-Baptiste and Josephte followed the pattern of the outsider male described by John Foster, and reinforced by other authors, but as Josephte was already in a relationship with a Métis fur trader before she met Jean-Baptiste, she was possibly not living with her Tsuut'ina community before this relationship, countering the pattern shown by Foster's research and further adding to the evidence that this process of Métis ethnogenesis was underway in this region.[21] Instead, Josephte's life aligns more with a situation of semi-autonomous female-headed families that Brown highlights in her discussion of locality. Brown describes

> there are a few signs that by the early 1800's, [Indigenous] women with a background of ties to fur traders could be found living with their offspring, relatively independently, in the orbit of one or another of the posts… In this northern region where metis groups were just becoming visible as such, the offspring of such female-headed units would have contributed to metis emergence, being themselves neither [Indigenous] nor trading post residents.[22]

So rather than Jean-Baptiste living with Josephte's community as Foster describes, Jean-Baptiste likely married a woman already living in connection to a fur trade post.[23] While some assert that Josephte was not connected to her community as the Tsuut'ina's traditional territory was further south than Fort des Prairies where the couple was located, there is evidence that the Tsuut'ina did remain as far north as Edmonton House to about 1795.[24] The couple settled in the Saskatchewan District, with Jean-Baptiste working at Fort des Prairies, Fort Carlton, and Fort Pitt.[25] By this

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[21] Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male."
[22] Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol," 42.
[23] Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male."
[24] Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male"; "Tsuut'ina (Sarcee) | The Canadian Encyclopedia," accessed January 18, 2023, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/sarcee-tsuu-tina; "Our History – Our Nation," Tsuut'ina, accessed April 1, 2023, https://tsuutina.com/our-history/; George Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont* (Markham, Ont.: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2003), 22.
[25] George Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont* (Markham, Ont.: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 20030, 22.

period the Tsuut'ina had moved further south after making a treaty with the Cree, and so it is clear that Josephte and Jean-Baptiste remained living near the forts rather than with her community. The couple likely did not live with her family at any time due to her pre-existing connections to the fur trade through her earlier relationship. However, the couple lived in "the lands of their maternal relatives" establishing matrilocal residency in the broader regional sense described by Macdougall, and this shaped the family's identity.[26] Their children left the Saskatchewan valley seeking employment and marriages, some finding their way to the Red River region.

The Red River Valley was central to the Métis Nation—the site of important nation-building events, such as the Battle of Seven Oaks and, later, the 1869–70 Red River Resistance. The Valley was a geographic zone between the forests and plains creating a parkland with its own geography and climate resulting in it becoming a provisioning area for the fur trade.[27] The Red River settlement consisted of parishes, numbering twenty by 1860, each featuring their own church and school, where French-Catholic or English-Protestant Métis lived.[28] Red River became a colonial settlement when Lord Selkirk gained rights to the banks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers in 1811 to provide space for dispossessed Scottish Highlanders (see fig. 9).[29] The land grant was of 300,440 square kilometers and extended beyond the yet to be established forty-ninth parallel.[30] Selkirk originally intended for the settlement to be a hub for supplies and transport for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), but he did not account for the competing interests of other parties. The nearby North West Company's (NWC) Fort Gibraltar, freemen, and Métis hunters were also active in the area, and they all sought to have some control over the movement of goods, resisting Selkirk's aim for monopoly.[31] The settlement was administered by the Council of Assiniboia, with the governor and council appointed by Selkirk until 1821. In 1821, after the amalgamation of the NWC and HBC, the HBC assumed the management of the colony and the

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[26] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 243.
[27] Ruth Swan, "The Crucible: Pembina and the Origins of the Red River Valley Metis" (Ph.D., Winnipeg Manitoba, University of Manitoba, 2003), 9–10.
[28] Gerhard John Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland: The Changing Worlds of the Red River Metis in the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 7.
[29] Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland*, 9.
[30] Ens, 12.
[31] Ens, 8–18.

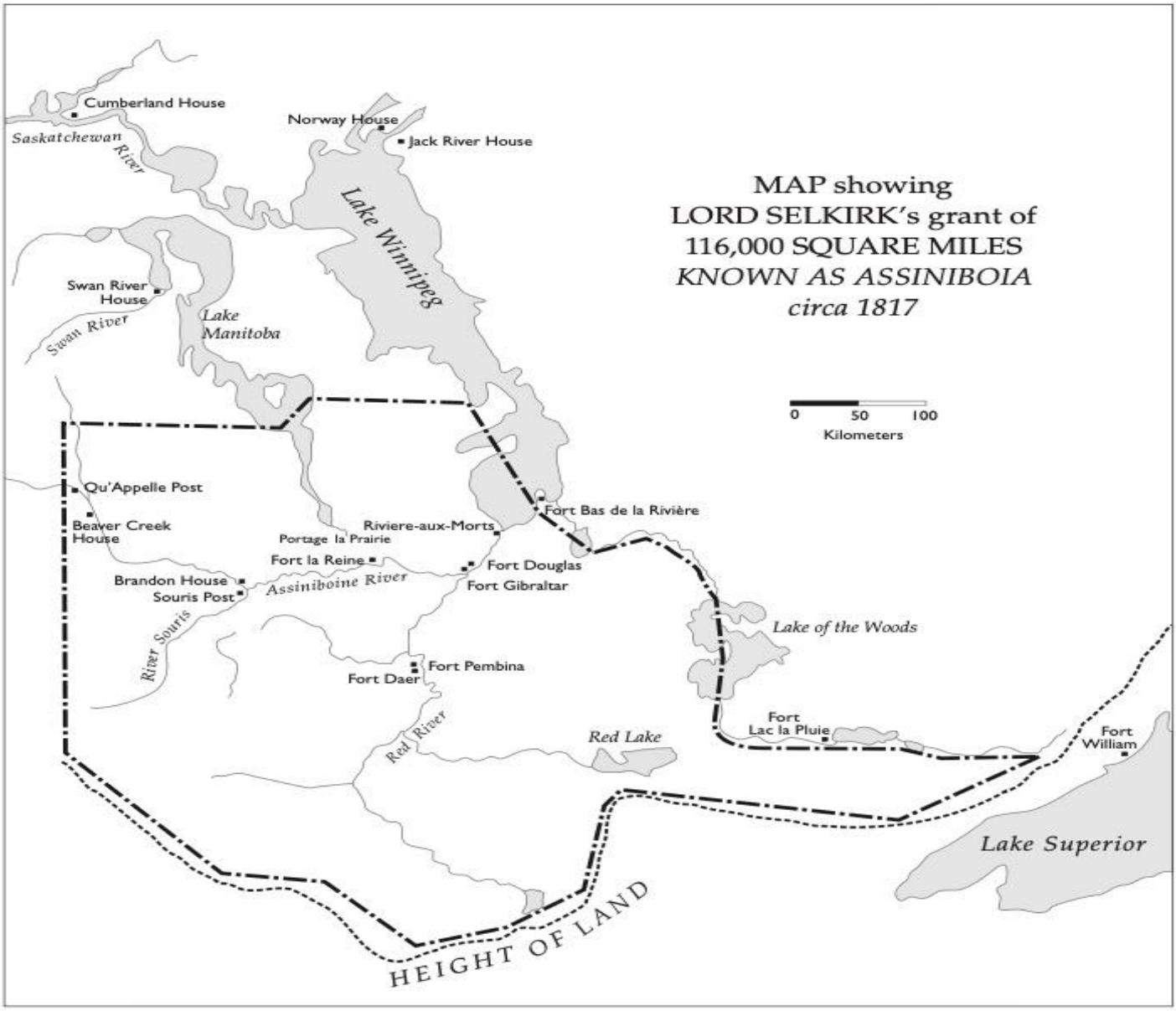

Figure 9 Map by Gerhard Ens in *Contours of a People*

Council of Assiniboia, the governor was then appointed from London.[32] At this time the HBC encouraged older officers and servants to retire at Red River in an attempt to lower their costs of labour while still maintaining access to provisions for the fur trade.[33] Despite these competing interests, the settlement of Red River remained strong and continued to attract Métis families to the area. Many moved there from nearby Pembina after the establishment of the international border located at the forty-ninth parallel. The boundary placed Pembina south of the border and

[32] Ens, 12.
[33] Ens, 10, 19.

the HBC removed its fort from the region.[34] Métis families that decided to settle in Red River, trying their hand at farming or other businesses, still had easy access to hunting and trading. Norbert Welsh described Red River and the success many found there; "Long ago, near Fort Garry there were a lot of farmers along the Red River. They were rich farmers, although they had small farms."[35] Here, Welsh describes the economic strength Métis farmers found in being linked to the region. Gerhard Ens promotes the 1840's as a vital period of Métis identity formation in this region as it saw increasing Métis involvement in the buffalo fur trade market creating a family-centred economy.[36] Therefore, by the time the first generation of Dumont children were adults and moved to Red River it was a well-established farming and trade center and an important region for the Métis people.

While the Dumont brothers Ekapow and Ska-kas-ta-ow originally travelled to the Red River region to take advantage of work opportunities, it was their marriages that incorporated this region as their home and likely encouraged them to remain in the area. One benefit of the choice to stay in Red River was the ability to remain close to their in-laws, in Saint Boniface, who offered valuable support.[37] In this period the region had a population of over four thousand, making the region substantially more populated than others in the northwest.[38] Ekapow and Louise Laframboise, married about 1833 and settled in Red River for several years while they raised their children.[39] In 1835 Ekapow worked as a middleman under contract with the HBC.[40] Ska-kas-ta-ow purchased land in 1835 in Red River, lot 40 located in the parish of St. Vital the same time as his marriage to Marguerite Laframboise. Ekapow purchased a riverlot about 67

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[34] Ens, 20.
[35] Norbert Welsh and Mary Weekes, *The Last Buffalo Hunter* (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1994), 119.
[36] Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland*, 5–7.
[37] Ens, 20–28; Sprague and Frye, *Genealogy of the First Métis Nation*, tbl.2.
[38] Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland*, 36; Aaron James Henry, "District Space, Population, and Biopolitics," in *Districts, Documentation, and Population in Rupert's Land (1740–1840)*, ed. Aaron James Henry (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 107–26, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-32730-9_6.
[39] "1838 Census Red River," 1838, lac_reel_c2170 C-2170 142093 RG 31 C 1, Library and Archives Canada, lac_reel_c2170 C-2170 142093 RG 31 C 1.
[40] Douglas N. Sprague and R. P. Frye, *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation: The Development and Dispersal of the Red River Settlement, 1820-1900* (Pemmican Publications, 1983), tbl. 3.

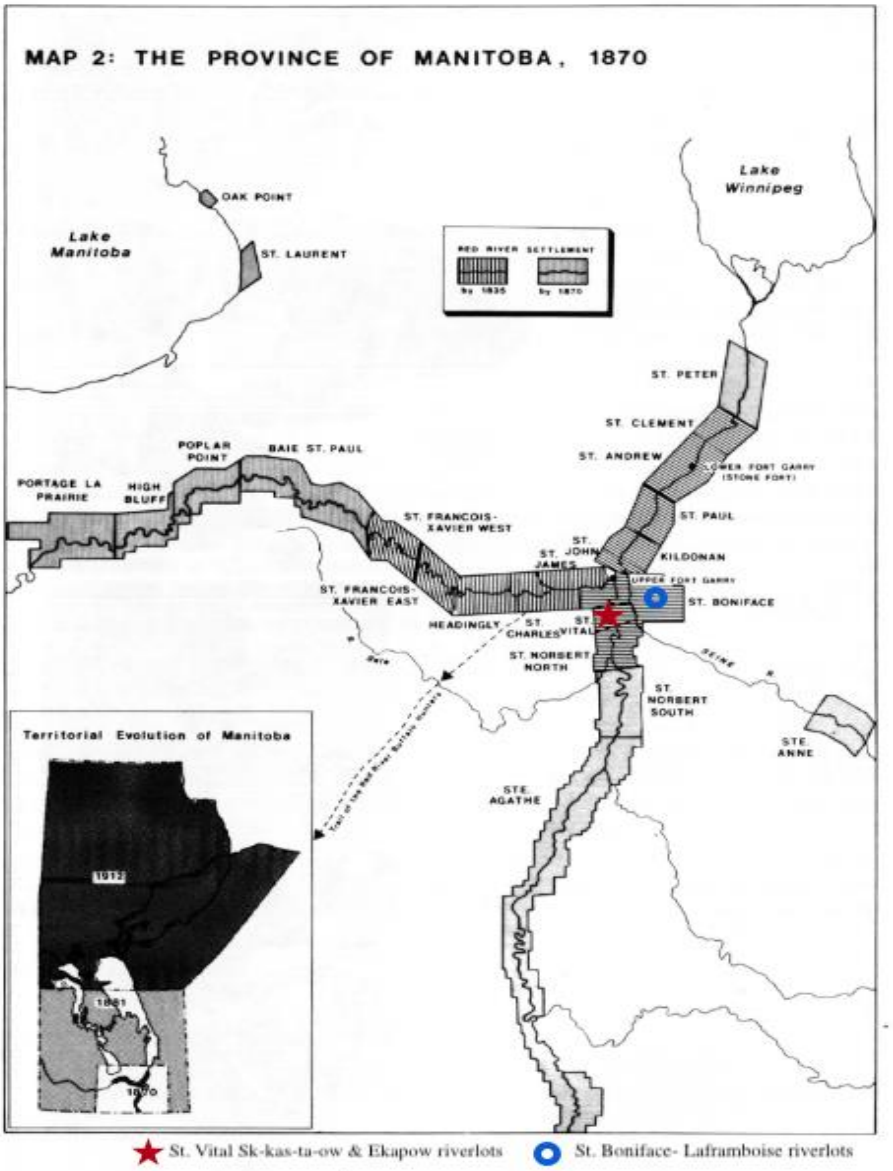

Figure 10 Red River 1870 Annotated to highlight location of Ekapow and Ska-kas-ta-ow's riverlots in relation to St. Boniface. Credit Sprague and Frye (1983)

acres in size and located a few kilometers south of Ska-kas-ta-ow.[41] Both Marguerite and Louise were daughters of Joseph Francois Laframboise, a middleman for the HBC until 1838.[42] Ska-kas-ta-ow purchased riverlot no. 778, fifty-seven acres located on the opposite side of the river from Ekapow, after his marriage to Marguerite Laframboise (see fig 10 which is annotated to

[41] Charles Duncan Thompson, *Red Sun: Gabriel Dumont, The Folk Hero*, 1st edition (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2017), 7; Sprague and Frye, *Genealogy of the First Métis Nation*, tbl.2.
[42] Sprague and Frye, *Genealogy of the First Métis Nation*, tbl.3.

demonstrate the closeness of the Laframboise and Dumont riverlots).[43] Red River was established on a riverlot system, something popularized in New France through the seigneurial system. This land division provided each family with access to the waterfront at one end of the long narrow lot with room for agriculture and housing.[44] The marriages and decisions to obtain riverlots in Red River demonstrates the importance these families placed on remaining near the Laframboise family, following the pattern of matrilocality.[45] The eldest brother, Nampesh, who was also in the region did not marry into or remain in the region, as is discussed later in this chapter, adding evidence to the marriages being a strong influence in their decision to remain in the region. For example, Cheryl Troupe discusses matrilocality in relation to the community of Round Prairie and the Trottier brigade and finds that female kinship was an essential part of the organization of the community despite changes that occurred.[46] Matrilocality allowed the women in the family to remain in the region they understood and to have the support of other women as Métis women's practice of visiting is a vital practice to maintain wellness and to share Métis women's knowledge.[47] Métis women held important knowledge of their homeland, including where and how to harvest important medicinal plants, and this knowledge would be vital to the success of the Dumonts, shared through the women of the family.[48] Additionally, Ekapow's sister Cecile moved to Red River upon her first marriage to Jacques Berger (she later married Louise's brother, Leblanc Laframboise), and their brother Nampesh also resided in Red River for several

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[43] Thompson, 7.
[44] Manitoba Métis Federation, *Riverlots and Scrip: Elements of Métis Aboriginal Rights.* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Metis Federation, 1978).
[45] Cheryl Lynn Troupe, "Métis Women: Social Structure, Urbanization and Political Activism, 1850-1980" (Masters Thesis, Saskatoon, Sk, University of Saskatchewan, 2009), 53–54, http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/etd-12112009-150223.
[46] Troupe, 54–55.
[47] Anna Corrigal Flaminio, Janice Cindy Gaudet, and Leah Marie Dorion, "Métis Women Gathering: Visiting Together and Voicing Wellness for Ourselves," *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 16, no. 1 (March 1, 2020): 55–63, https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180120903499.
[48] Nathalie Kermoal, "Métis Women's Environmental Knowledge and the Recognition of Métis Rights," in *Living on the Land: Indigenous Women's Understanding of Place*, ed. Nathalie Kermoal, Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez, and Kahente Horn-Miller (Edmonton, Alberta: AU Press, 2016), 107–37.

years.[49] By marrying into established Métis families, the Dumonts do not exhibit strict matrilocality as previous scholarship has revealed. Instead, the Dumont's marriages relied on incorporation into established Métis regions and families to establish themselves as a Métis family. By several siblings marrying and moving to the same region, they follow unilocality as described by Brown, allowing the siblings to gain support from the Laframboise family and incorporate that region into their understanding of home.

While Red River as a settlement is important, a more regional and family centered understanding of the area is necessary.[50] The Dumont family-maintained connections to the entirety of the Red River Valley including the more southern Pembina region.[51] While Ekapow and Ska-kas-ta-ow's riverlots were farther north they both partook in the Pembina based buffalo hunt led by Jean-Baptiste Wilkie.[52] Pembina's proximity to the buffalo's natural migration paths

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[49] Morin, "Descendancy Chart Jean Baptiste Dumont-3693"; "Red River Settlement Census Returns Sent to the Governor and Committee," 1838, E.5/9 (H2-033-2), Archives of Manitoba; "Red River Settlement Census Returns Sent to the Governor and Committee," 1835, E.5/8 (H2-136-1-2), Archives of Manitoba; "Red River Settlement Census Returns Sent to the Governor and Committee," 1840, E.5/10 (H2-033-2), Archives of Manitoba.
[50] Macdougall and St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility"; Swan, "The Crucible: Pembina and the Origins of the Red River Valley Metis," 12.
[51] The settlement of Pembina was founded around 1780 with an HBC fort established by Peter Grant. The entire Red River Valley was part of the Rupert's Land charter to HBC. Pembina was the focus of the regional fur trade of beaver pelts in the early nineteenth century. The region's fur trade market resulted in tensions between groups, such as the Ojibwe who had moved west following the trade, and the Dakota who were being pushed west out of the region. The Red River route, in comparison to the Ontario track, which was longer and safer, brought potential violence for small groups and this helped limit the movement of southern fur traders into the region for quite some time. But Pembina was strategically located where the buffalo herds migrated to cross the Red River, providing easy access for those who settled near the fort. Missionaries arrived in the Pembina region in 1818, drawn by Catholic French Canadian freemen and families who were living in the area. Resulting in the establishment of Pembina as a formal parish, similar to the parishes developed in Red River. So in many ways, Pembina can be seen as a southern extension of the Red River settlement. Pembina originally had a larger population than the Red River Settlement and between 1780 and 1813 was the focus of the fur trade. But, as mentioned, a migration occurred after the establishment of the forty-ninth parallel and the move of the HBC fort in 1818. However, Pembina maintained a large population of 1,135 in 1850. Ruth Swan, "The Crucible: Pembina and the Origins of the Red River Valley Metis" (Ph.D., Winnipeg Manitoba, University of Manitoba, 2003), 6–17; Gerhard John Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland: The Changing Worlds of the Red River Metis in the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 19–21.
[52] Macdougall and St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility," 25.

made it a key buffalo hunt centre. Alexander Ross described how the buffalo hunt in the 1840s drew hunters south from St. François Xavier to Pembina. It was in Pembina that the hunters rendezvoused, creating a camp as large as a city of the time, carts formed in a circle, where the chiefs and captains were elected, including Jean-Baptiste Wilkie as the hunt chief.[53] While Ekapow and Ska-kat-ta-ow were part of the Wilkie hunt brigade, it was Ekapow's son, Gabriel Dumont's marriage to Wilkie's daughter Madeleine that further connected the family to the Pembina area and strengthened the alliance between the two families.[54] Just as the Laframboise sisters brought the Dumonts to the region, the Wilkie sisters brought men into the hunting brigade, Gabriel Dumont, Pierre Berger, and Joseph Gariepy.[55] These marriages brought the Dumont family into established Métis families and spaces, forging a continued connection to the region, supporting their understanding of homelands.

Marriages to the Laframboise and Wilkies brought the Dumonts east of the Saskatchewan Valley, but it also linked one of the first generation of children back to the Edmonton district. Nampesh eventually moved further west to an established, semi-permanent Métis settlement in the Edmonton district (see figure 12 which shows the location of wintering sites and Métis settlements connected through waterways). With the help of his friend, Father Jean-Baptiste (Abé) Thibault, Nampesh helped found a mission at Mânitow Sâkahikanihk (Lac Ste. Anne) in 1841.[56] Mânitow Sâkahikanihk began as a community of two hundred Métis families that wintered over in the area,[57] but with the establishment of the mission and during Nampesh's leadership, it expanded to over two thousand people, rivalling nearby Fort Edmonton in size.[58] The community histories say that it was a Métis man, Piche, who sent a request to Bishop

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[53] Alexander Ross, *The Red River Settlement: Its Rise, Progress, and Present State, with Some Account of the Native Races and its General History to the Present Day* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1856), http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/qPy5X, 245–46,
[54] Cheryl Lynn Troupe, "Madeline Dumont (1840–86)," Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan, 2015, http://esask.uregina.ca/entry/dumont_madeleine_1840-86.html.
[55] Macdougall and St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility," 26.
[56] Denney, Charles, "Handwritten Notes about First Generation of Dumont Family – 2 Pages."
[57] Hivernants and the act of wintering over is described in greater detail later in this chapter.
[58] R. C. Macleod, "Biography – DUMONT, GABRIEL – Volume XIII (1901–1910) – Dictionary of Canadian Biography," http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/dumont_gabriel_13E.html.

Provencher, in St. Boniface, for a priest to live with the community.[59] The Bishop turned to Jean-Baptiste Thibault (1810-1879), a farmer's son who was educated at the seminary of Quebec, and upon being admitted into the subdiaconate, came to the northwest.[60] Thibault gained a reputation for being prideful, as he refused to accept the hospitality offered at HBC trading posts, but records show his disinclination was more likely because he was shocked by the behavior of traders.[61] Upon arriving in Saint-Boniface in 1833 and being ordained as a priest by Bishop Provencher, Thibault was noted to be an effective preacher who was not too verbose and was good at advising, which gained the attention of Provencher who wanted Indigenous Peoples of the northwest to be converted through persuasion.[62] Thibault studied Cree and Anishinaabemowin making him an ideal person to send as a missionary across the prairies.[63] Thibault's first trip was done by horseback and lasted six months, going as far as Edmonton House.[64] This period saw missions established in several communities from the English River District to Mânitow Sâkahikanihk.[65] After Thibault's exploratory trip through the northwest he returned to Mânitow Sâkahikanihk in 1842 with Nampesh guiding him to begin the mission.[66] Thibault remained in the region for a decade.[67] The establishment of the mission just furthered

Figure 11 Jean-Baptiste Thibault LAC Mikan 3221620

[59] "History," Sunset Point, accessed April 7, 2023, https://sunsetpoint.ca/about/history/.
[60] Lionel Dorge, "Thibault, Jean-Baptiste," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10 (University of Toronto/Universite Laval, 2023), http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/thibault_jean_baptiste_10E.html.
[61] Dorge.
[62] Dorge.
[63] Dorge.
[64] Dorge.
[65] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 137.
[66] It should be noted that some sources state this occurred in 1843. Maire Anderson-McLean, "The Landscape of Identity: Man'tow Sâkahikan or Lac Ste-Anne," *Religious Studies and Theology* 18, no. 2 (December 1999): 5–32; Paul L. Gareau and Jeanine Leblanc, "Pilgrimage as Peoplehood: Indigenous Relations and Self-Determination at Places of Catholic Pilgrimage in Mi'kma'ki and the Métis Homeland," *Material Religion* 18, no. 1 (January 1, 2022): 32–45, https://doi.org/10.1080/17432200.2021.2015923.
[67] Dorge, "Thibault, Jean-Baptiste."

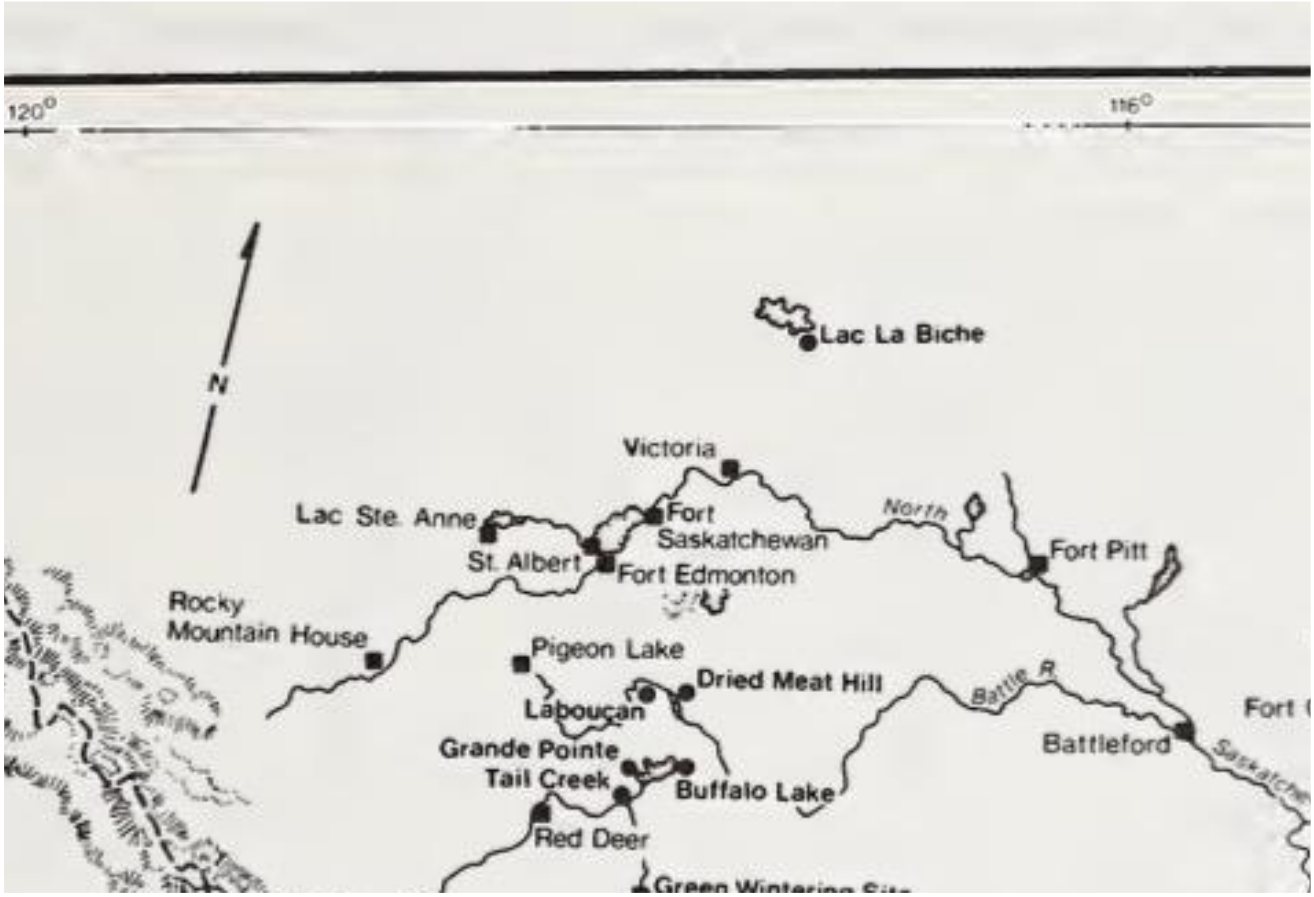

Figure 12 Métis Wintering Sites Western Canada Credit Doll, Kidd and Day

the spiritual importance of Mânitow Sâkahikanihk for the Métis community that lived there, but the lake held spiritual connections for all Indigenous nations who visited.

Nampesh's connection to Mânitow Sâkahikanihk shows the Dumont family incorporating an important Indigenous centre as part of their homeland. Mânitow Sâkahikanihk, also known as Wakamne by the Nakoda, was an important Indigenous gathering space for several hundred years, the waters known to be healing by many different nations.[68] Maire Anderson-McLean's research into the spiritual connections of Mânitow Sâkahikanihk reveals similar stories by Cree and Nakoda individuals, all noting the holy nature of the lake where the inexplicable crafts a mythic aura common to pilgrimage sites.[69] Nakoda Oral Tradition tells of a young man, who had a dream about the lake and the abundance of life it contained. After a journey to locate the lake

[68] "History"; Anderson-McLean, "The Landscape of Identity: Man'tow Sâkahikan or Lac Ste-Anne."
[69] Anderson-McLean, "The Landscape of Identity: Man'tow Sâkahikan or Lac Ste-Anne," 11–15.

he sees a woman spirit who represents Mother Earth, and he moves his people (Alexis Nakoda Nation) to the lake.[70] Other Oral Traditions refer to a large monster that lived in the lake creating dangerous and unpredictable currents, garnering the name Devil's Lake.[71] However, it was Thibault who named the lake and mission Lac Ste-Anne, after the mother of the Virgin Mary, grandmother of Jesus.[72] The priests who lived at Mânitow Sâkahikanihk recorded the healing of ailments, including tuberculosis, gout, and paralysis, believing that the waters were the source of the cure.[73] It was these reports, along with the miracle claimed by a priest named Lestanc, that turned the mission into a Catholic pilgrimage site. After the buffalo disappeared, the population mostly moved away, and Father Lestanc, having decided to close the mission, travelled to France for a holiday. Lestanc prayed at the Shrine of Ste Anne d'Auray, and that God revealed the mission must not close, but rather Lestanc should build a shrine to honor St. Anne, where pilgrims could come for spiritual help.[74] To this day, the mission at Mânitow Sâkahikanihk continues to be an important site of pilgrimage for Catholics and Indigenous peoples.

The establishment of the mission transformed Mânitow Sâkahikanihk into a permanent Métis settlement. At first the mission was just a small shack that had no windows and was built to house Father Thibault and a young priest Joseph Bourassa, Métis people created riverlots and permanent homes around the mission.[75] Mânitow Sâkahikanihk became an important provisioning region for the local fur trade posts. It was here that Nampesh married a Métis woman, Suzanne Lussier, in 1842.[76] Suzanne already was in the area having nine children from a previous relationship, the marriage of Suzanne and Nampesh was performed by Thibault.[77] The decision to marry Suzanne tied Nampesh more permanently to the area and the Métis families

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[70] Anderson-McLean.
[71] Alice Simonne Charland, "First Nations and the Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage" (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1994), https://www.proquest.com/docview/194784041/citation/A93A5166B41C431DPQ/1.
[72] Anderson-McLean, "The Landscape of Identity: Man'tow Sâkahikan or Lac Ste-Anne," 15.
[73] Charland, "First Nations."
[74] Charland.
[75] Charland.
[76] Gail Morin, "Descendants of Jean Baptiste Dumont 3693" (n.d.), Gail Morin Genealogy Database, Glenbow Archives; Provincial Archives of Alberta, Oblates of Mary immaculate Archives (OMIA) Register, Lac Ste. Anne, Fort des Prairies, Edmonton as cited in Thompson, *Red Sun*, 18.
[77] Thompson, 18.

that lived there through kinship following the pattern of matrilocality. Nampesh quickly established himself within the community, being elected as president and hunt chief. Though Nampesh had previous ties to the region through work and his father's work at Fort des Prairies, Suzanne's knowledge and ties to the region would have been an integral part of his success in integrating into the community. As such, Nampesh established permanent ties to this region of the Métis homeland. Altogether the first generation of Dumont children born in the northwest connected to important Métis regions through their marriages, allowing a large expanse of the Métis homelands to become part of their Métis identity.

The Métis kinship practices align with the concept of wahkootowin: recognizing that all relatives were accountable to one another.[78] Métis society views mutual aid and support as a primary cultural value, with individuals being responsible for the well-being of the collective, and this meant that individuals could be moved to new regions of the homelands to give or gain this support. Thus, like many other Métis families, the Dumonts also lived in multi-generational households. [79] Upon Jean-Baptiste's death, Josephte followed her children to Red River, rather than returning to her Tsuut'ina community.[80] Also, it was common for widowed Métis parents to

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[78] Brenda Macdougall, "'Wahkootowin': Family and Cultural Identity in Northwestern Saskatchewan Metis," *The Canadian Historical Review* 87, no. 3 (2006): 431–62; Brenda MacDougall, "'The Comforts of Married Life': Metis Family Life, Labour, and the Hudson's Bay Company," *Labour / Le Travail* 61 (2008): 9–39; Macdougall, *One of the Family*; Krystl Raven, "Beyond the Battlefield: Gabriel Dumont and Métis Leadership (1837-1885)" (Master's Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2017), http://hdl.handle.net/10388/8075; Krystl Raven, "Ka Oopikihtamashook': Becoming Family," *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 14, no. 4 (2018): 319–25, https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180118821170.

[79] Leah Dorion, "Metis Family Life" (Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2003), 19–24, https://www.metismuseum.ca/media/document.php/01262.VM%20-%20Family%20Structures.pdf.

[80] Macdougall and St-Onge list Jean-Baptiste as working at Forts des Prairies until his death spring of 1815. However, I have not been able to locate any information regarding when Jean-Baptiste passed away. Thompson notes Josephte as "retiring" to Red River, staying with Ekapow or Ska-kas-ta-ow about 1849. Thompson cites Woodcock for that information. I believe it is accepted that Josephte did live with her children for the remainder of her life in Red River. Woodcock writes that Roger Goulet remembered Josephte's move in the 1940s to live with her daughter, Mrs. Lafournaise, however it is unclear which daughter this refers to. I believe this to be Cecile, who was in Red River and married into the Laframboise family (by 1830) and then the Desmarais family. Per Goulet Josephte passed away shortly after, her burial records were destroyed in the 1860s when the Cathedral burned. Woodcock notes the oral tradition remembers

move in with their youngest children.[81] Multiple generation households also allowed the passing of traditions and knowledge to the younger generations, maintaining the family's identity. The extended family was an important aspect of Métis social structure, important in the past and in contemporary times.[82] A more contemporary example is found in Maria Campbell's writing where she discusses the important role her female family members played in her life, "Mom did her best to turn me into a lady, showing me how to cook, sew, and knit, while Cheechum, my best friend and confidante, tried to teach me all she knew about living."[83] Grandmothers were key in passing on knowledge to their grandchildren, they had the time to help with the grand-children and having reached menopause were not limited to some ceremonies due to menstruation as mothers were.[84] This multi-generational household and familial support is represented in the Dumont family when Josephte moved to Red River after the death of Jean-Baptiste and lived with her sons and daughters, helping with the children, and receiving the support she needed after the passing of her husband.[85] This decision moved Josephte across the plains—further from her Tsuut'ina family— signalling that her children were the ones responsible for caring for her after her husband's passing. But also, Josephte likely saw these Métis spaces as her home, expanding her concept of home beyond that of Tsuut'ina territory. It is unclear in the records what connections Josephte maintained with her Tsuut'ina relatives in this period, but she brought with her to Red River her knowledge of how to use the land passed on to her from her ancestors to share with her children and grandchildren. While the Dumont family spread across the plains, they clearly maintained connections and responsibilities to one another as directed by their understanding of kinship. However, kinship was not the only reason why the Dumont children

her only as Jean-Baptiste's widow. Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility," 29; Charles Duncan Thompson, *Red Sun*, 19; Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont*, 22–23.

[81] Diane P. Payment, *The Free People - Li Gens Libres: A History of the Métis Community of Batoche, Saskatchewan* (UCP: University of Calgary Press, 2009), 44, https://canadacommons-ca.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/artifacts/1874295/the-free-people/2623471/.

[82] Leah Dorion, "Metis Family Life" (Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2003), 19–24, https://www.metismuseum.ca/media/document.php/01262.VM%20-%20Family%20Structures.pdf.

[83] Maria Campbell, *Halfbreed* (McClelland & Stewart, 2019), 46.

[84] Kermoal, "Métis Women's Environmental Knowledge and the Recognition of Métis Rights," 122.

[85] George Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont* (Markham, Ont.: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2003), 22.

moved and develop a connection to the broader Métis homelands; their livelihood also informed their movement within the Métis territory.

PIMATSHIISHOOHK-LIVELIHOOD

[Dumont] was comfortable in what we call now Montana, but it wasn't called that then as there was no American border, no Saskatchewan border, but he lived comfortably in the Missouri Valley, in parts of Ohio but lived comfortably also in northern Alberta, northern Saskatchewan, lived comfortably in what is could be described as our center, I guess our headquarters in the Red River where his kin was and where a lot of his kinfolk was, and lived in that community also.

Bruce Flamont[86]

While kinship was one way in which the Dumont family connected to certain areas of the Métis homelands, their experience of those lands was greatly influenced by how they chose to support their families. The Dumonts' livelihood often required them to travel across the expanse of the Métis homelands, their knowledge of the land necessary to be successful in their economic ventures, and Gabriel's ability to do this is something that Bruce Flamont notes in the quote above, demonstrating the importance of this knowledge of land to Métis identity and ability to support one's family. This understanding and use of the land influenced their evolving Métis identity because, as Brenda Macdougall notes, the concepts of "homelands, residency and the trade — were all necessary to spark and/or foster the emergence of the Métis as a people."[87] St-Onge and Podruchny further connect the economy and the emergence of the Métis, arguing the sheer size of the area in which the Métis "traveled, lived, and worked" connected their identity to the land.[88] Like many Métis families at the time, the buffalo hunt was a main economic activity for the Dumonts and shaped their relationship to the land. By the early nineteenth century, the hunt created income through the fur trade and pemmican economies, and it was a source of subsistence, providing the family with food and other resources, such as hides. Pemmican, a dried meat that was mixed with melted fat and tallow—berries often added for flavour and nutrients—

[86] Bruce Flamont, interview with Krystl Raven, February 14, 2020.
[87] Macdougall, *One of the Family*, 95.
[88] St-Onge and Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web," 80–81.

was an essential food supply for the fur traders and voyageurs in the northwest.[89] While pemmican has a long tradition— 5000-6000 years— on the plains, the pemmican economy in connection to the fur trade, shaped plains culture encouraging longer distance travel, increased trade and conflict, as well as improving food security.[90] The importance of the land where the buffalo roamed meant that the Métis often spent most of their lives traversing the land and that movement influenced their identity and understanding of territory.[91] The Métis emerged within this capitalist economy and centred their lives on the buffalo hunt to meet the market demands.[92] Étienne Rivard, in his exploration of the links between oral histories and geography in the nineteenth century, uses Louis Goulet's words to show how the prairie was (and is) connected to Métis identity,

> Those days of my childhood and adolescence were so beautiful, I wouldn't hesitate to say they were the most exciting years in all Métis history (with the stress on Metchiff). We had the virgin prairie, with all the buffalo we could use, and no competition from the Indians since they were pacified. The old-timers who'd lived through the old days and the wars on the prairies were still with us.[93]

This quote reveals several things about Métis understanding of the buffalo hunt and its connection to territory. By this time, they saw where the buffalo roamed as a Métis space, other Indigenous nations otherwise occupying the land were not competition, but groups that shared the space (see figure 13 for a visual of the expanse of space the buffalo travelled).[94] The buffalo hunt

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[89] George Colpitts, *Pemmican Empire: Food, Trade, and the Last Bison Hunts in the North American Plains, 1780–1882*, Studies in Environment and History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 9–10, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107045354.
[90] Colpitts, 10.
[91] Étienne Rivard, "'Le Fond de L'Oest' Territoriality, Oral Geographies and the Métis in the Nineteenth-Century Northwest," in *Contours of a People Metis Family, Mobility, and History*, ed. Nicole St-Onge, Carolyn Podruchny, and Brenda Macdougall (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 151, http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3571331.
[92] Cheryl Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories: Land Use, Gender and Kinship in the Qu'Appelle Valley, 1850-1950" (Ph.D., Saskatoon, Sk, University of Saskatchewan, 2019), 64, http://hdl.handle.net/10388/12122; St-Onge and Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web."
[93] Louis Goulet as quoted and translated in Rivard, "'Le Fond de L'Oest'," 151.
[94] Rivard, 151–52.

required the Métis to cover large distances to locate the herds, relied on their expert knowledge of the plains,[95] and that knowledge shaped their identity.

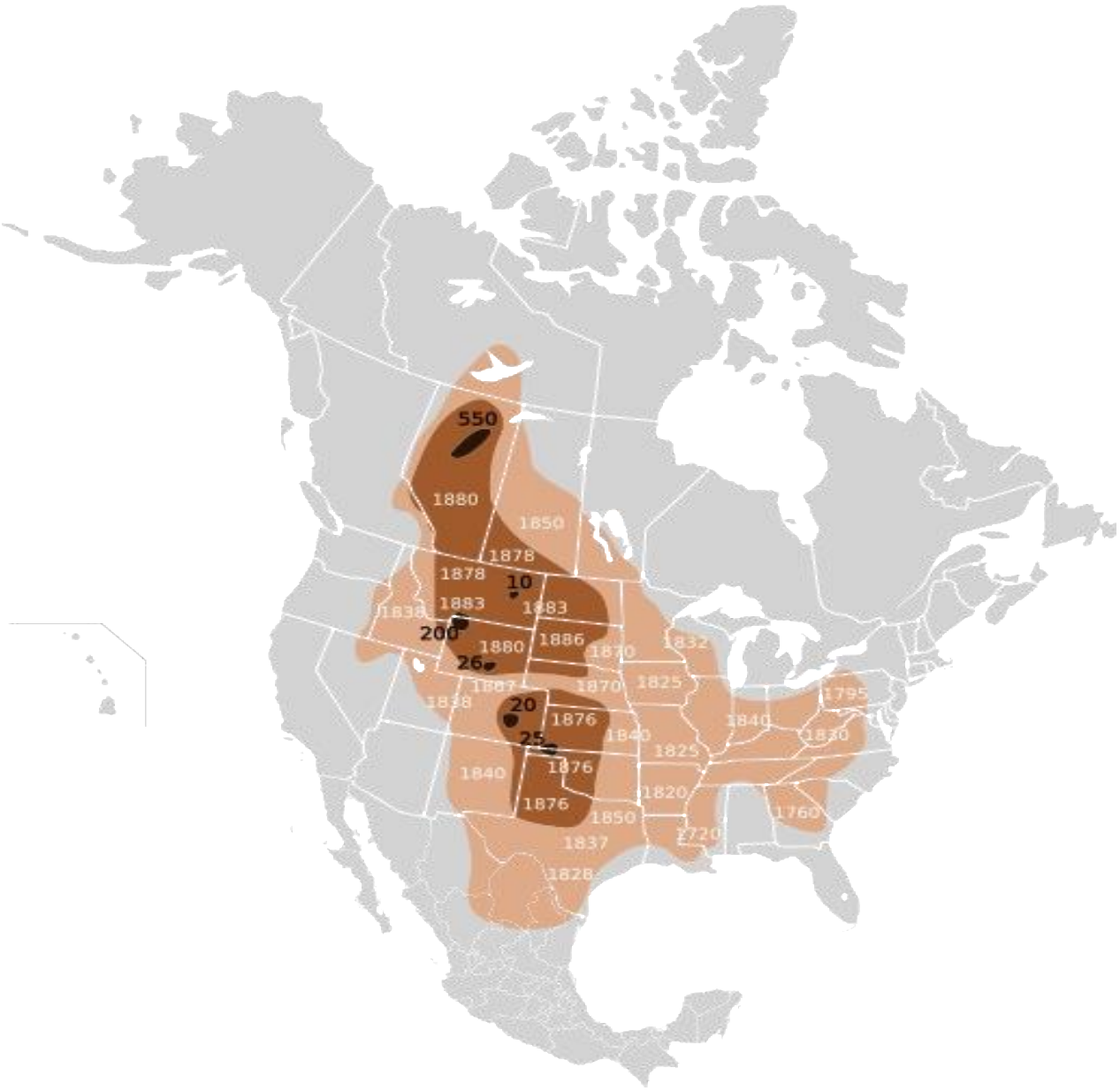

Figure 13 Extermination of the Buffalo adapted from drawing by William Temple Hornaday CC-by-sa-3.0

Tracing the Dumont family's involvement in the buffalo hunt reveals how they traversed the expanse of the Métis homeland and experienced and understood the territories. Several

[95] Nicole St-Onge, Carolyn Podruchny, and Brenda Macdougall, *Contours of a People Metis Family, Mobility, and History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 10, http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3571331.

Dumont men participated in the buffalo hunt as their main occupation. Ekapow, Ska-kas-ta-ow, Nampesh, and Gabriel were all elected as buffalo hunt chiefs, leading their family and community members across the plains at least twice a year.[96] By Gabriel Dumont's birth in 1837, the small family hunts had grown into large multi-family and multi-group events with brigades of hundreds of people.[97] In 1840, Ekapow and family participated in the hunt led by Jean-Baptiste Wilkie, Gabriel's future father-in-law. The brigade departed from the Red River area, stopped in Pembina, and added more families as it travelled.[98] Wilkie led the hunt for nineteen days before finding buffalo. The hunt journeyed south through the Métis homelands, following the Missouri River for a week, and finding the most southern edge of their territories before turning west.[99] The route of each hunt was determined by scouts who tracked the buffalo; thus, experienced leaders and scouts were more likely to lead successful hunts.[100]

Figure 14 Painting by William Perehudoff 1961 Credit PAS S-ms-b 3118

[96] Préfontaine and Young, "Bison Hunting."
[97] Préfontaine and Young.
[98] Alexander Ross, *The Red River Settlement*.
[99] Ross, 255, 265.
[100] Préfontaine and Young.

Overall, the hunts were a long-term commitment for a family, making a large portion of the Métis homelands their home for the season. Travelling to join a brigade led by a talented hunt chief was worth the time and effort, as hunting brigades ensured that all families received sufficient provisions. For instance, Gabriel's hunt in 1870, included a group of Métis who had travelled from Winnipeg to the South Saskatchewan River—a trip of over one month, averaging eighteen to thirty miles a day.[101] Those leading the hunts not only needed a deep understanding of the buffalo and their movements, but also of the land they were navigating. Their connection to the land, and their knowledge of it, was passed down through generations incorporated into their Métis identity. The reputation gained by Gabriel and his father and uncles demonstrates the way that they were seen as Métis by the broader Métis community: as Métis men who knew the land, resources, and political situation on the plains enough to provide success to the brigade.

Apprenticing was one way in which this knowledge of the land and the resources found upon it were transmitted to the younger generation. Gabriel was known as a buffalo caller and apprenticed under more experienced hunters—Wilkie and his father—to acquire these skills.[102] Because each hunt included entire families, Métis children learned how to hunt from a young age. For the boys, this meant being mentored by older men to gain the necessary skills to help provide for their future family.[103] As mentioned in the previous chapter, Métis children could be apprenticed by adults they wished to gain skills from. Gabriel Dumont was apprenticed by Jean-Baptiste Wilkie. Evidence of Gabriel's time with Wilkie at a young age is found in the archival records. For example, when Nampesh married Suzanne Lucier, the registrar also records Ekapow and Louise at Mânitow Sâkahikanihk, but only two of the couple's children—Edouard and Elizabeth— were with them. Charles Thompson believes that Gabriel, who was about five at the time, was possibly apprenticing with Jean-Baptiste Wilkie when he was wintering at Buffalo Lodge.[104] Mentoring allowed cultural knowledge of the land to be passed down through

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[101] Constance Kerr Sissons, *John Kerr* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946), 86.
[102] Préfontaine and Young state that young hunters rode beside their fathers, who whipped the horse to keep it running into the herd and not give time for the young hunter to show any fear. Thompson, *Red Sun*, 15–16; Préfontaine and Young, "Bison Hunting."
[103] Kim Anderson, Robert Alexander Innes, and John Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities: Carrying the Bones of the Ancestors." In *Canadian Men and Masculinities: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Wayne Martino and Christopher J. Greig (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2012), 266–84.
[104] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 19.

generations, maintaining Métis identity and allowing Dumont children, such as Gabriel, to gain knowledge and experience on the homelands beyond their immediate family.

Participation in the buffalo hunt meant that Métis people understood that their homelands were situated within overlapping Indigenous territories. Indigenous homelands shifted over time, owing to external pressure from fluctuating ecologies and colonial settlements. Colin Calloway describes the migrations and changes of nations through the northwest influenced by the reintroduction of the horse and the easier access to European guns between the eighteenth and nineteenth century.[105] For example, the Plains Cree, had been originally located near James Bay, but followed the fur trade west adopting a plains culture with their geographic move.[106] Migrations also brought the Shoshones to the plains, giving them access to new resources and the buffalo culture as they adapted to the use of the horse (see figure 15 for a visual representation of the horse diffusion and influence on Indigenous nations 1500-1800).[107] As such, Indigenous territories were consistently negotiated over time, and the Métis saw their homeland as occupied by others who also saw it as their territory. In some cases, such as with the Cree, the Métis were

[105] Colin Calloway, *One Vast Winter Count: The Native American West before Lewis and Clark*, History of the American West (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), chap. 6, http://library.usask.ca/scripts/remote?URL=http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.03497.0001.001.
[106] Richard Preston, Zach Parrott, and Michelle Filice, "Cree," Canadian Encyclopedia, accessed April 10, 2023, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/cree.
[107] Calloway, *One Vast Winter Count*, chap. 6.

Figure 15 Horse diffusion and population movements on the Great Plains c.1500-1800 Credit Calloway (2003)

able to negotiate alliances that provided access to resources in a peaceful manner.[108] Still, negotiating conflicting claims was not always peaceful.

As such, these overlapping territories influenced Métis understandings of rights to land

[108] The Métis were part of the Nehiyaw Pwat (Iron Alliance). Innes, *Elder Brother*, chap. 2; Larry Chartrand, "Indigenous Peoples: Caught in a Perpetual Human Rights Prison," *University of New Brunswick Law Journal* 67 (January 2016), 167; Brenda MacDougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Kinscapes and the Buffalo Chase: The Genesis of Nineteenth-Century Plains Métis Hunting Brigades," in *The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories*, ed. Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 103; Cheryl Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories: Land Use, Gender and Kinship in the Qu'Appelle Valley, 1850-1950" (Ph.D., Saskatoon, Sk, University of Saskatchewan, 2019), 5.

and resources. For example, the buffalo hunt could include Métis, First Nations, and sometimes even non-Indigenous hunters—who were welcomed because of their labour rather than territorial rights.[109] By cooperating, the Indigenous groups acknowledged similar rights to the territory and the bounty of the land, including the buffalo. Lisa Schaub discusses Norbert Welsh's description of the buffalo hunt and how it developed a concept of shared community and land use that also acknowledged an individual's property.[110] While the buffalo hunt required knowledge of the large expanse of land, the resources upon it were shared, available to all, until someone's labour was added. For example, the buffalo were a communal resource, all in the area had equal access and claim to them. However, through the hunt and processing of the meat, that resource became property of the individual.[111] Yet, not all parties who considered the plains home joined in the Métis hunts or understood the sharing of these resources and land in the same way, which could lead to conflict as the brigades travelled. Examples of these conflicts also reflect the political aspects of Métis identity forming in relation to their homelands.[112]

The 1851 Battle of Grand Couteau is one of the more well-known instances of cross-cultural conflict attributable to these intersecting territories and illustrates the Dumont family's experience of these disagreements regarding territory. The Métis were locked in long-term conflict with the Dakota, who felt that the Métis were trespassing in Dakota territory.[113] In 1851, Ekapow and thirteen-year-old Gabriel were part of the large Jean-Baptiste Wilkie hunt brigade when they entered this disputed territory. One reason for the size of hunting brigades was to be safer as they travelled into regions in which they did not have alliances to prevent conflict. The Métis were cautious and attentive to the increased danger as they proceeded with their hunt. In retaliation of this perceived territorial encroachment, the Dakota kidnapped several of the Métis scouts and attacked the Métis camp the following day.[114] In the ensuing conflict, the Métis suffered some losses, but far fewer than the Dakota owing to their unique Métis fighting style and

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[109] Sissons, *John Kerr*, 133, 152–68.
[110] Lisa Schaub, "Reconstructing Métis Territoriality and Identity in the Life of Norbert Welsh, 1840s-1880s," in *150 Years of Canada: Grappling with Diversity since 1867*, ed. Ursula Lehmkuhl and Elisabeth Tutschek (Waxmann Verlag, 2020), 100.
[111] Schaub, 103.
[112] St-Onge and Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web," 60.
[113] Hogue, *Metis and the Medicine Line*, 36.
[114] William Morton, "The Battle of Grand Coteau: July 13 and 14, 1851." In *Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1970), 45–59.

defensive tactic of circling their wagons. Following the skirmish, the Métis were able to continue their hunt, but this battle was a reminder of the danger they faced while moving through areas with overlapping claims to land and resources. The Métis saw this area as part of their territory and did not believe they were trespassing, as demonstrated by their continued movement through the territory, showing a different understanding of territory to the Dakota who clearly asserted their rights to the land through the attack.

The Battle of Grand Couteau has been analyzed by several scholars. Michel Hogue discusses the nuances of the relationship regarding land between the Métis and the Dakota noting that while the Battle of Grand Couteau is a stark reminder of the danger that came through these overlapping territories, there is also an often-overlooked narrative of peace treaties that were negotiated in attempts to minimize conflict.[115] For example, just a decade before in 1840 a group of Sisseton Dakota warriors ambushed Wilkie's brigade killing a Métis hunter who was butchering his kill. While this led to the Métis retaliating and killing eight Dakota members, it led to discussions between the two groups. Sisseton chief Burnt Earth visited Wilkie to protest what he saw as excessive retribution for the death of one man, "'Only one of your friends fell,' Burnt Earth lamented, 'and for that one, you murdered eight of my countrymen.'"[116] The result of the conversation was Wilkie following Dakota cultural practices of providing items to honour the dead, and began a period of Métis and Dakota leaders meeting before the summer hunt to affirm a truce. Hogue notes however that often the gatherings "meant to establish or reaffirm peaceful relations aggravated existing enmities. On various occasions violence disrupted the peace councils…."[117] Additionally, Adam Gaudry situates the Battle of Grand Couteau like Hogue, as part of a longer history of Dakota and Métis diplomacy. Gaudry notes that the battle was governed by diplomatic protocols and likely not something that occurred with the goals of war, but "rather a failure to achieve a diplomatic consensus that usually prevented such violence."[118] As such, the relationship between the Métis and the Dakota is an example of how the Métis' understanding of their homelands required acknowledgement that they were making claims to

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[115] Hogue, *Metis and the Medicine Line*, 36–37.
[116] Hogue, 37.
[117] Hogue, 37.
[118] Adam Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves': A Political History of Métis Self-Determination in the North-West, 1830-1870" (Dissertation, Victoria, University of Victoria, 2014), 160.

territories that were not vacant. They had to negotiate their access and rights to these lands with the other nations of the region to allow the mobility that was foundational to Métis identity.

Métis mobility was shaped by their economic ventures and affected their connection to the land. Métis knowledge of the land was necessary because of the size of the hunts and the distance that they traveled; owing to this, some Métis families lived a buffalo hunt lifestyle year-round, while others joined certain hunts throughout the year. This often reflected how they lived during the non-hunt months; those who joined the occasional hunt lived in a more permanent settlement, while those hunting year-round remained more mobile. The decision between living a settled or mobile lifestyle was not linear, and families could shift between these options numerous times throughout their lives, depending on their social and economic circumstances. St-Onge, Podruchny, and Macdougall articulate that while mobility, geography, and family are elements found in European and Indigenous cultures, the Métis experience regarding these aspects was unique.[119] They define Métis mobility as a "form of movement that establishes fixed communities. That fixedness, however, never quells [the Métis'] movements."[120] Therefore, mobility is not a matter of being nomadic. Rather, mobility brings shared knowledge of the expanse of the Métis homelands as members moved throughout regions in seasonal cycles; their understanding of home not limited to the space they personally occupied but to all of the Métis homelands.[121] St-Onge, Podruchny, and Macdougall suggest that the Métis' mobility was distinct because, unlike other groups (European and Indigenous), the Métis occupied a better part of North America, and the regional communities were able to shift and move between geographic regions, connected through family and economy, all shaping a Métis sense of homelands and territory.[122] As part of their Métis mobility, the Dumont family at times were connected to specific settlements, but also spent a large amount of their lives navigating the plains through the hunt and wintering over in hivernants.[123]

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[119] St-Onge, Podruchny, and Macdougall, *Contours of a People Metis Family, Mobility, and History*, 7.
[120] St-Onge, Podruchny, and Macdougall, 9.
[121] St-Onge, Podruchny, and Macdougall, 9–10.
[122] St-Onge, Podruchny, and Macdougall, 12.
[123] Hivernants refers to the Métis who chose to winter over on the plains, hivernements refers to the wintering sites they would build each year.

Choosing to take part in the fall hunt often moved the hunting brigade far from any settlement and resulted in families living in hivernants, or wintering sites, such as Petite Ville, Willow Bunch, Turtle Mountain, and Buffalo Lake.[124] While earlier the Métis were more focused on the pemmican trade by the 1850-60s Métis families expanded to the robe production aspect of the buffalo hunt.[125] This, combined with the dwindling numbers of buffalo who were moving farther west onto the plains, saw Métis hunting brigades following the buffalo. By the 1850s the tradition of wintering over was adopted by many families to remain in proximity to the buffalo's wintering ranges.[126] In his early years, Gabriel primarily lived a mobile lifestyle, travelling and hunting throughout most of the summer through fall before the hivernements, a semi-permanent community, were set up for the winter months. These hivernements incorporated entire families that followed the buffalo year-round not returning to the larger settlements. This allowed the brigades to hunt throughout the year and gain convenient access to the superior winter buffalo robes. The decision to winter over on the plains created a lifestyle pattern of "hunting, mobility, and wintering over"[127] until the buffalo became nearly extinct by 1880.

Wintering over on the plains meant developing semi-permanent housing for the winter and remaining more mobile throughout the rest of the year by living in Métis' four-sided tents. The hivernement was a group of temporary cabins that were not constructed to last, but still had chimneys, cellars, refuse areas, and fireplaces.[128] Louis Goulet's description tells that the

> great majority of winter shacks were made of poplar, which was the most common wood in the forests of the upper Missouri. It was by far the most abundant tree and easiest to work, but once it was squared and dried in the shade it could be as durable as oak. So, I wouldn't be surprised if some of those houses I saw built are still standing, especially the ones made of cedar or cypress.[129]

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[124] Macdougall and St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility," 22.
[125] Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories," 66.
[126] Troupe, 80.
[127] David V. Burley, "Function, Meaning and Context: Ambiguities in Ceramic Use by the Hivernant Metis of the Northwestern Plains," *Historical Archaeology* 23, no. 1 (January 1989): 98, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03374101; Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland*, 77.
[128] Burley, "Function, Meaning and Context," 99.
[129] Louis Goulet translated and quoted in: Étienne Rivard, "'Le Fond de L'Oest' Territoriality, Oral Geographies and the Métis in the Nineteenth-Century Northwest," in *Contours of a People*

These mobile communities, which consisted of several families, tended to winter in similar areas each season, which the families knew well. For example, Turtle Mountain region by the early 1850s was noted to have access to a supply of food and by 1853 the wintering village had about 45-50 houses and approximately four hundred people.[130] Cheryl Troupe explores the way that Métis hunting brigades used the forts and trails as stopping points as they travelled to and from their hivernements, connecting the brigades from St. Paul, Minnesota to the Northern plains (see fig. 16). These trails "defined the geography of the Métis world, connecting families, communities, and economies."[131] Kisha Supernant's work regarding Métis trails recognizes the experience required to know routes and the "complex decisions made by people in landscapes where they ha[d] intimate knowledge of the places through which they travel[ed]."[132] Further, she questions how the decisions made regarding routes were affected by memory and the presence of family, demonstrating that more than land influenced the way the Métis travelled across the homelands.[133] The trails and the areas travelled when living the mobile lifestyle influenced where Métis families decided to situate their hivernants.

Living in the hivernements required intimate knowledge of the land and a connection to it. It was imperative that the Dumont family wintered over in a familiar area, choosing land that provided the necessary resources and protection. The Dumonts only survived if they had

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Metis Family, Mobility, and History, ed. Nicole St-Onge, Carolyn Podruchny, and Brenda Macdougall (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 153, http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3571331.

[130] Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories," 80.

[131] Troupe, 81–82.

[132] Kisha Supernant, "Modeling Métis Mobility? Evaluating Least Cost Paths and Indigenous Landscapes in the Canadian West," *Journal of Archaeological Science*, Archaeological GIS Today: Persistent Challenges, Pushing Old Boundaries, and Exploring New Horizons, 84 (August 1, 2017): 63–73, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jas.2017.05.006, 71.

[133] Supernant, 71.

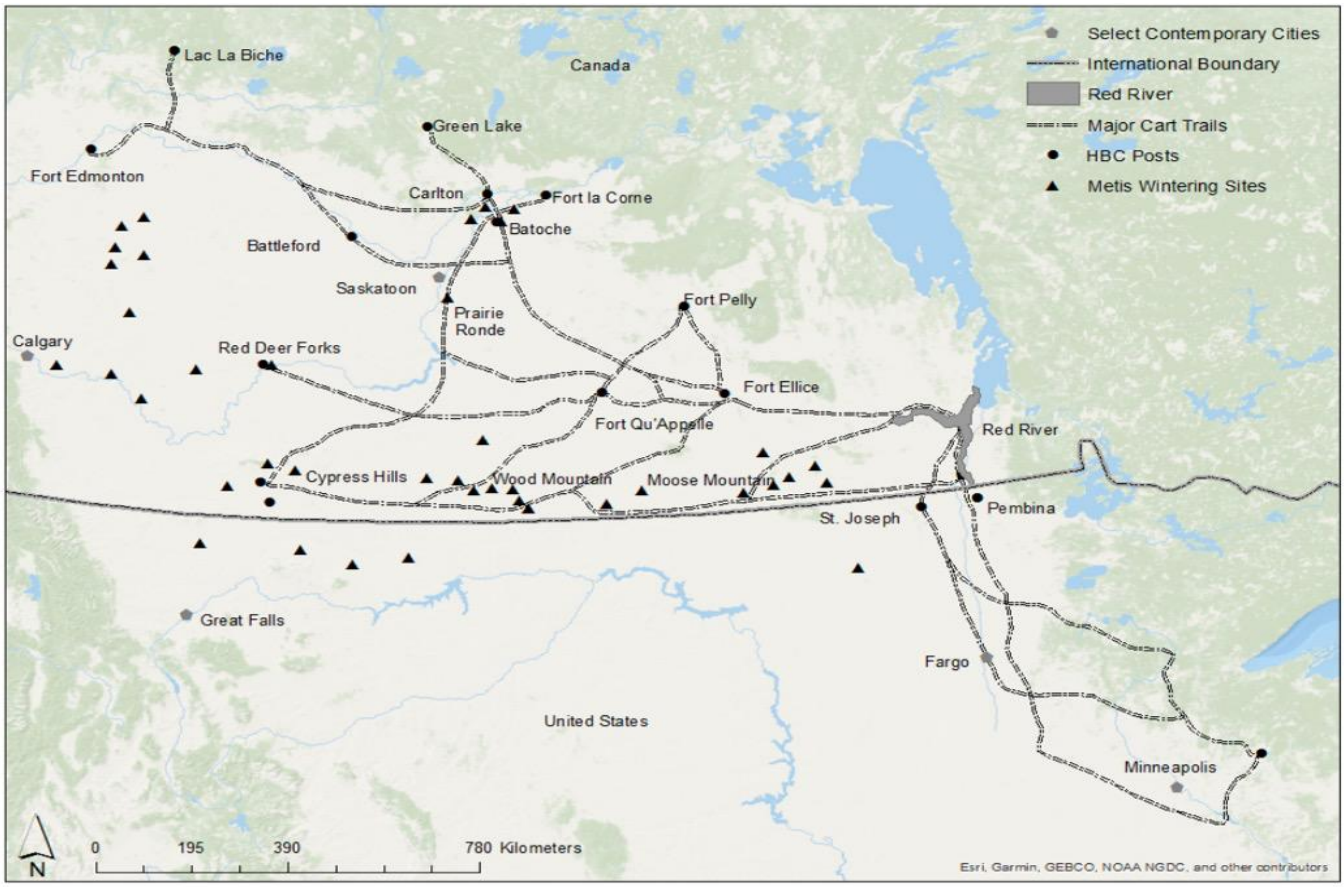

Figure 16 Cart Trails and Métis Wintering Sites c 1850-60s Credit Troupe (2019)

adequately prepared for the seasons, had chosen a location close to the winter-grazing lands of the bison and other animals they could hunt, and did not need to rely on external help for supplies, because if the weather was poor—travel could not occur. John Kerr, who lived with the Dumont brigade for several years when Gabriel would have been about thirty-five years old, provided some details about what wintering preparations involved in their community. One important aspect was ensuring that there was sufficient wood and fresh meat after the main winter hunt was complete, usually the first week of November.[134] These preparations took three to four days on average, whereafter the hunters returned to the hivernements as soon as possible.[135] They also relied on kinship, with several Dumont families wintering over together. Gabriel usually wintered near his father, Ekapow, as well as his cousin Petit Jean.[136] Wintering over combined kinship and Métis knowledge of land to make use of the best economic opportunity provided by

[134] Sissons, *John Kerr*, 103.
[135] Sissons, 103.
[136] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 41, 84.

the buffalo hunt. Additionally, families did not always winter in the same areas, building multiple wintering houses over their lives. For example, Norbert Welsh who lived a mobile lifestyle for much of his life noted "in all I must have had about twenty wintering houses on the Saskatchewan plains."[137] Therefore Métis mobility over the land, including hivernants, demonstrates an understanding of territory that was not fixed to one specific place or livelihood.

The knowledge of the land incorporated in Métis identity allowed Métis people to participate in multiple occupations. While the buffalo hunt combined a capitalist economy and subsistence labour, many Métis participated in wage labour and created what John Lutz has termed a "moditional economy" that combined capitalist, subsistence, and prestige economies.[138] During this period, the Métis could choose between these multiple economies. The Métis adapted their economic ventures to account for the ever-changing circumstances on the lands they shared (both peacefully and contentiously) with others. Such adaptations even included adopting multiple sources of income, to not rely solely on the buffalo hunt, particularly as the buffalo numbers declined. Cheryl Troupe discussed mixed economies for the Qu'Appelle Métis community, noting the expertise the Métis had in regards to the social and political aspects of the fur trade that allowed them to create a niche as guides and freighters.[139] For example, the HBC looked to "experienced men such as Antoine Desjarlais, William Daniel, William Birston and Pierre LaPierre to act as guides and interpreters."[140] The Red River region also saw guides working for the British Boundary Commission in 1872 for the survey of the forty-ninth parallel. This group, the 49th Rangers, was led by a Métis man, William Hallet, who was a buffalo hunt chief as well as trader and farmer from the St. James parish.[141]

The Dumont family, then, was no exception in partaking in this moditional economy. One example of this guiding work was in 1858, brothers Ekapow, Ska-kas-ta-ow, and Nampesh worked as guides for the British North American Exploring Expedition (commonly referred to as

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[137] Norbert Welsh and Mary Weekes, *The Last Buffalo Hunter* (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1994), 96.
[138] John S. Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008); This changed when the buffalo hunt ended, and especially after the 1885 North-West Resistance, as discussed by St-Onge in her book. Nicole St-Onge, *Saint-Laurent, Manitoba: Evolving Métis Identities, 1850–1914*, edition (University of Regina Press, 2004).
[139] Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories," 89–90.
[140] Troupe, 89–90.
[141] Ens, Homeland to Hinterland, 157.

the Palliser Expedition). The Palliser Expedition was a survey of the prairies between 1857 and 1860, intended, among other things, to identify potential railway routes. The group, led by John Palliser, required someone to guide them through the Rocky Mountains, and an employee of the expedition, Hector, travelled from Fort-des-Prairies (Fort Edmonton) to Mânitow Sâkahikanihk to find more Métis to work during the upcoming summer. However, Hector had to wait, as most of the Métis were away buffalo hunting, and eventually, with the help of Peter Erasmus, he headed to the plains to find the brigade.[142] Hector's records indicate that the Métis men who had joined the expedition were dressed in European clothing and spoke both French and Cree. Hector spent most of the day convincing hunt chief Nampesh to join their expedition.[143] He likely sought out Nampesh on suggestion of the other Métis he had already hired for this portion of the expedition.[144] Nampesh invited his brothers to join as they had often worked together; as such, Nampesh continued his role as provider by offering this work to family members, thereby supporting more of the Dumont family.[145]

The addition of Ekapow and Ska-kas-ta-ow represents again the embracing of wahkootowin in relation to livelihood. Nampesh here is not just providing income to his nuclear family (Suzanne and children) but to his siblings and as such to several families. It was only the brothers' who obtained this opportunity, likely because Palliser and his crew only expected men to be able to do such demanding work. However, the Dumont brother's employment relied on family members, especially their wives, to take on the labour necessary to maintain the home in their absence.[146] The brothers' ability to take on this work demonstrates that they embodied knowledge of the expanse of land west of Mânitow Sâkahikanihk through the Rocky Mountains.

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[142] Irene M. Spry, *The Palliser Expedition: An Account of John Palliser's British North American Exploring Expedition 1857–1860* (Toronto: The MacMillan Company, 1973), 110, 113–14.
[143] Spry, 114.
[144] Spry, 114.
[145] Spry, 110; John Palliser, "Papers Relative to the Exploration by Captain Palliser of That Portion of British North America Which Lies between the Northern Branch of the River Saskatchewan and the Frontier of the United States; and between the Red River and Rocky Mountains [Microform]: Presented to Both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, June 1859" (G.E. Eyre and W. Spottiswoode, 1859), CIHM Monograph Collection, University of Alberta Library, https://archive.org/details/cihm_39119; Anderson, Innes, and Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities: Carrying the Bones of the Ancestors."
[146] Anderson, Innes, and Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities: Carrying the Bones of the Ancestors," 270.

Nampesh provided Hector with information about the mountains to help plan the next season of the expedition.[147] The work was considered dangerous, understanding the social and political tensions of the region, the men insisted that many Métis be hired and plenty of ammunition be supplied. Likely the timing of Hector's request influenced Nampesh's decision to take on the job, as winter did not conflict with the larger and still lucrative buffalo hunts. Nampesh is not often named in the Palliser Expedition records, but the available information indicates that the expedition required special knowledge that Métis people had, such as dog sledding and buffalo hunting, as well thorough knowledge of the area and mountain passes.[148] The Dumont's involvement in the Palliser Expedition confirms the brothers had gained an in-depth knowledge of the region that was recognized by others, and demonstrates that the family had incorporated the vast Métis homelands as theirs within this first generation of children born on the plains.

The next generation of Dumonts also relied on guiding to supplement their income. Gabriel had a reputation as a trail master and led groups who could not travel safely on their own through the Saskatchewan Country. This work supplemented his buffalo hunting, providing income opportunities in the quieter parts of the hunting year.[149] By 1858, Gabriel, age twenty-one, had travelled through dangerous areas and negotiated passage for groups, particularly colonial agents, from northern Alberta to the Mississippi River.[150] Like his father and uncles, he had gained a reputation as someone reliable who had vast knowledge of the land and those who lived upon it. The Dumont men relied on their understanding of the land, including the social and political aspects of the regions in which they worked. Thus, guiding required much of the same knowledge as the buffalo hunt. To travel safely through the land as guides, they had to understand overlapping territories and know which areas were safe at which time of the year. Like his father and uncles, Gabriel's work as a guide depended greatly on his Métis knowledge and alliances with other Indigenous groups to ensure safe travel for his employers.

In addition to guiding the Dumont family participated in the freighting industry, an economic activity embraced by several Métis families. By the 1840s, the Métis found themselves in a new era with the end of the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly, and some, such as Ekapow,

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[147] Spry, *The Palliser Expedition*, 114.
[148] Spry, 116–19.
[149] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 65.
[150] Thompson, 65.

took advantage of the increased movement of goods in the area by doing freighting work.[151] By 1859, Red River had become an important freighting hub as the HBC no longer controlled the movement of goods in the area.[152] Gerhard Ens discusses the freighting work out of Red River noting that many of the merchants were wealthy enough to buy their own fleet of carts and York boats to move goods between Hudson Bay and the Valley of the Lake Winnipeg, employing others to work as freighters.[153] The freighting work was tied to the growth of the Red River settlement where merchant shops grew from one in 1835 to over fifty six by the year 1856.[154] It was in this period that the Dumonts were connected to the Red River region. For instance, Ekapow and Louise farmed and sold pemmican in Red River, and by 1838, they had broken and ploughed three acres of land to grow potatoes and barley in addition to raising horses.[155] They had built a small house with a stable, and had five horses (three stallions and two mares), two calves, one harrow, and a canoe for fishing.[156] Ekapow also owned four river carts with which he transported goods for others on a contract basis.[157] The Métis "acted decisively to control or take advantage" of the changing economy, and Ekapow's freighting work capitalised on the company's shifting policies.[158] Freighting could yield more income than the family farm and it was less dependent on the weather for success. It was also possible to combine the freighting work with the buffalo hunt by delivering the goods to the brigades they would then join for the hunt. The competitive hunt economy increased traffic as well as the demand for carts, allowing more families to diversify into freighting during this period.[159] Freighting relied on the Red River cart, a uniquely Métis invention, positioning this industry as Métis dominated. The carts became more common as the HBC shifted to their use rather than York boats, and cart trains became the norm from centres such as St. Paul.[160] Some Métis families shifted away from Red River in the 1870s to build freighting businesses further west in the plains. For example, Louis Goulet left Red River to base a freighting company out of Batoche, as it was recognized that, after the

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[151] Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland*, 72.
[152] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 67.
[153] Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland*, 89.
[154] Ens, 89.
[155] "1838 Census Red River."
[156] "1838 Census Red River."
[157] "1838 Census Red River."
[158] Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland*, 72.
[159] Ens, 86–89.
[160] Ens, 89.

Manitoba Act of 1870, farming and wage labour was more successful further west.[161] By taking advantage of this new economic option and combining it with the buffalo hunts, the Dumonts' Métis knowledge of the land gave them the adaptability to sustain multiple economic ventures throughout their lifetime.

This flexibility of labour was also later required owing to environmental changes, particularly as the buffalo numbers began to dwindle in the late 1860s, solidifying several Dumont family members' connections to a specific area of the Métis homelands. By 1870, several family members, living a more mobile lifestyle, acknowledged the need to become more settled before the influx of Euro-Canadian settlers and as they recognized the likelihood of the buffalo hunt not remaining as a viable main source of livelihood.[162] For Gabriel, who was about thirty-three years old, this would be a major shift, his life had primarily been that of a mobile lifestyle, and while he had worked in other areas of employment, the buffalo hunt was the main economic venture for his family. In the autumn of 1870, several Métis families stopped on the bank of the South Saskatchewan to prepare their hivernants for the winter. Settled into a wedge of land in the bend of the river they erected thirty hivernants cabins, and invited Father Moulin to join them for the winter.[163] This region was not new to Métis families, for several decades Métis families had been wintering near Qu'Appelle River, File Hills, and Gros Ventres Forks, and an increased number of camps were established in the 1860s near Fort Carlton.[164] By this time, the buffalo herds were reducing in numbers, and the political conflict in Red River had encouraged this influx of Métis families to the region. Diane Payment notes that the land of Fort Carlton was

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[161] Ens, 167–71.

[162] There is no clear date for when the buffalo hunt ended. Some state that it ended in 1870, but according to many sources hunting was still occurring at that stage; however, they had to travel farther, and there were far fewer buffalo than in previous decades. Many note the 1864 hunt in which millions of buffalo were killed as a turning point in the buffalo hunt economy. Foster, "The Métis and the End of the Plains Buffalo in Alberta." In Préfontaine and Young, "Bison Hunting"; Welsh and Weekes, *The Last Buffalo Hunter*; Geoff Cunfer and Bill Waiser, *Bison and People on the North American Great Plains: A Deep Environmental History* (Texas A&M University Press, 2016); M. Scott Taylor, "Buffalo Hunt: International Trade and the Virtual Extinction of the North American Bison," *American Economic Review* 101, no. 7 (December 2011): 3162–95, https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.101.7.3162.

[163] "St. Laurent de Grandin Sask 1871-1986," 86, St. Laurent de Grandin, Saskatchewan Archives Board.

[164] Payment, *The Free People - Li Gens Libres*, 33.

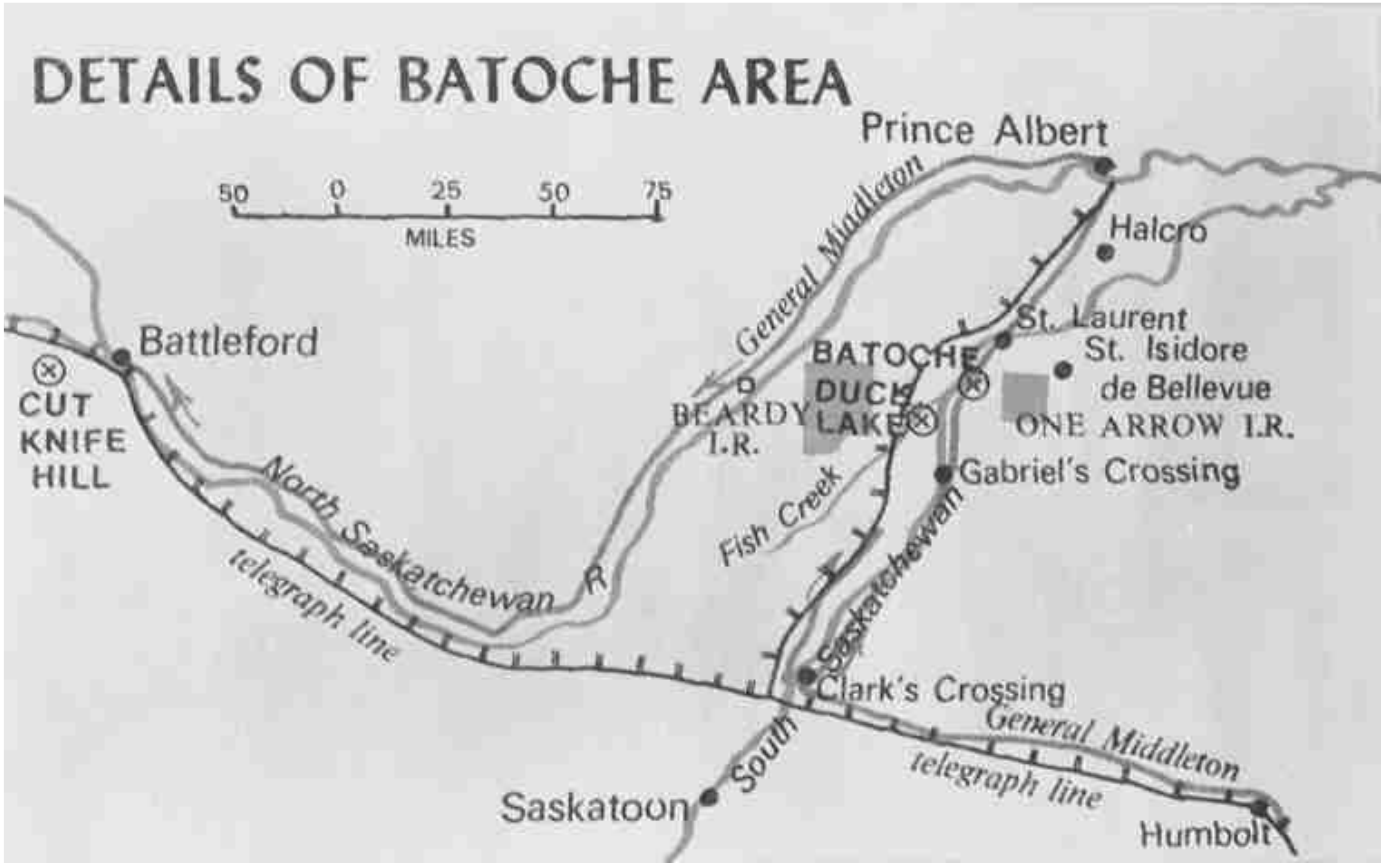

Figure 17 Ca. 1885 Credit Morton Manuscript Collection University of Saskatchewan Special Collections c565

not ideal for permanent settlement, as it did not have the correct soil for farming, lacked wood resources and made provisioning difficult to obtain. This combined with a smallpox epidemic in 1870 created tension and fear in the wintering communities and combined led to discussions of a relocation to a more ideal permanent site.[165]

In December of 1871 this "Petite Ville" had Pere André join them and discussions about creating a more permanent settlement would begin.[166] Gabriel Dumont, along with Ekapow, Petit Jean (Gabriel Dumont's cousin), and Ska-kas-ta-ow's families, joined other Métis families (Philippe Gariépy, James Short, and Mrs. Marguerite Ouelette, Baptiste and Alexandre Hamelin, Antoine Fleury, Jonas Moreau, and Pierre Landry, Joseph Ouelette, Antoine Ferguson, Charles Racette, and Baptiste Boyer) from their hunting brigades to form the permanent settlement of St.

[165] Payment, 33.
[166] "St. Laurent de Grandin Sask 1871-1986."

Laurent de Grandin, which included a Catholic mission developed by Pere André.[167] Ekapow supported the idea of the movement to a permanent colony.[168] It was Ekapow's knowledge of the area, acquired through his family's history of wintering over in the region, that led to the establishment of the mission and town on the southern side of the South Saskatchewan River.[169] Ekapow suggested a tract of country between Fort Carlton and Prince Albert that had "good soil, plenty of wood for building and fuel and wild hay in abundance. The grasses were good for the horses and the spot not too far from the buffalo country" the resources currently lacking in the Petite Ville's location.[170] Recognizing, that a wintering site such as Petite Ville may have been an ideal spot due to its closeness to Fort Carlton and the buffalo wintering ranges, but that did not mean it was an ideal spot for a more permanent settlement in which the goal of farming would be added to their livelihoods. The Hudson's Bay Company census in 1871 recorded 321 people in the St. Laurent Settlement, which would rise to 450 by 1877 and just over five hundred in 1878.[171] (see figure 17 for a map of his region in 1885 and the table below for a list of the families in the region 1871.)The establishment of St. Laurent de Grandin saw many of the community members continuing to participate in the buffalo hunt and creating other avenues of livelihood.

MÉTIS WINTERING AT ST. LAURENT DE GRANDIN MISSION, 31 DECEMBER 1871[172]					
HEADS OF FAMILIES	**Men**	**Women**	**Children**	**Total**	**Horses**
(André, Father Alexis)*	1			1	2
(Bourgine, Father)*	1			1	

[167] Payment, *The Free People - Li Gens Libres*, 34.
[168] "Metis Meetings," January 5, 1872, Richard C. Hardisty Fonds, Glenbow Archives, https://www.glenbow.org/collections/search/findingAids/archhtm/hardisty.cfm#series9.
[169] "Metis Meetings."
[170] "Métis Meetings."
[171] Payment notes these figures are not fully accurate as some settlement members were still buffalo hunting and therefore possibly not in the settlement at the time of census. Payment, *The Free People - Li Gens Libres*, 34.
[172] Payment, app. 1.1.

Batoche [Letendre], André	1	1	6	8	1
Batoche [Letendre], Louison Jr.	1	1	3	5	10
Batoche [Letendre], Louison Sr.	1	1		2	12
Batoche [Letendre], Xavier	1	1	3	5	16
Boyer, Baptiste	1	1	4	6	12
Cadieux [Cayen], Alexandre	1	1	6	8	8
Colin, Maxime	1			1	
Dumont, Édouard (A)	1	1	2	4	12
Dumont, Édouard (B)	1			1	
Dumont, Élie	1	1	2	4	10
Dumont, Gabriel	1	1	1	3	10
Dumont, Isidore dit Escapoo	1	1	2	4	20
Dumont, Isidore Jr.	1	1	7	9	18
Dumont, Jean dit Chakasta	1	1		2	18
Dumont, Jean Jr.	1	1	7	9	18
Dumont, Louis	1			1	1
Dumont, Vital	1	1	3	5	8
Falcon, Athanase	1	1	1	3	2
Ferguson, Antoine	1	1	4	6	8
Fisher, Alexandre	1	1	2	4	5
Fleury, Antoine	1	1	2	4	8

Gariépy, Philippe	1	1	4	6	20
Gariépy, Pierre	1	1	9	11	10
Gladu, Antoine	1	1	2	4	5
Hamelin, Alexandre	1	1	4	6	18
Hamelin, Elzéar	1	1	1	3	3
Hamelin, Joseph	1	1	5	7	18
Hamelin, Josué	1	1	5	7	8
Houle, François	1	1	6	8	6
Laframboise, Augustin	1	1	4	6	12
Laverdure, Pierre	1	1	3	5	8
Lafond, Baptiste	1	1	5	7	4
Landry, Louis	1	1	4	6	6
Masson, François	1			1	
Moreau, [?] widow		1		1	1
Moreau, Jonas	1	1	3	5	5
Ouellette, Marguerite*		1		1	
Ouellette, Moise	1	1	5	7	18
Parenteau, Alexandre	1	1	3	5	6
Parenteau, Baptiste	1	1	7	9	30
Parenteau, Élie	1	1	3	5	6
Parenteau, Gabriel	1	1	2	4	6

Parenteau, Isidore	1	1		2	6
Parenteau, José	1	1	6	8	12
Parente au, Joseph Jr.	1	1		2	6
Parenteau, Joseph Sr.	1	1	4	6	12
Parenteau, Louis	1	1	6	8	10
Parenteau, Raphaël	1	1		2	4
Patenaude, Joseph	1			1	2
Plante, Antoine	1			1	5
Plante, Xavier	1	1		2	3
Poitras, Ignace	1	1	7	9	12
Primeau, Baptiste	1	1	1	3	8
Racette, Augustin	1	1	4	6	6
Racette, Charles Jr.	1	1	6	8	12
Racette, Charles Sr.	1			1	
Racette, Joseph	1	1	5	7	12
St. Denis, Célestin	1	1		2	3
Sansregret, Pierre	1	1	5	7	8
Short, James	1	1	6	8	12
Smith, [?] widow		1	6	7	6
Thomas, Charles	1	1	1	3	10
Vandale, Baptiste	1	1	6	8	12

Vandale, Baptiste (B)	1	1	1	3	2
Villeneuve, Théophile	1	1	5	7	6
Welsh,John	1			1	4
TOTALS	63	58	198	321	567
*** Except for Fathers André and Bourgine, and Marguerite Ouellette Who farmed and worked as a domestic servant, all the others were identified as hunters. (A), (B) = Two people with the same name. Source.' GA, Richard Hardisty Papers, File 32.**					

These economic ventures relied on the understanding of land and the interconnectedness of the Métis homelands and the industries and economies that relied on the resources of the northwest.[173] Gabriel and Madeleine, in their mid-thirties, created a home across the river from St. Laurent de Grandin, at Gabriel's Crossing, just south of the settlement of Batoche. The family established a successful store and ferry business.[174] The ferry location was strategic; it was situated on key routes for hunters, traders, and government agents travelling from the east toward the Edmonton district. Gabriel's expertise of the land, including knowledge of which spot in the river was ideal for a ferry crossing, ensured the success of this new venture.

Métis connections to waterways are well known, as waterways were important routes in which the fur trade expanded into the northwest, and in the ways Métis used the riverlot system in their settlements. Scholarship has demonstrated the importance of waterways to Métis communities. Contemporary Métis' relationship with water is discussed by Leah Dorion and Curtis Breaton as they delve into their personal histories regarding Métis identity and the rivers.[175] Dorion directly connects Métis mobility and kinship to the river systems that allowed

[173] St-Onge and Podruchny, "Scuttling alongside a Spider's Web," 62.
[174] Father Alexandre André, "Petite Chronique de St. Laurent," 1894 1871, Oblates Archives, Provincial Archives of Alberta.
[175] Leah Dorion and Curtis Breaton, "River Water Flows through Our Veins," in *Métis Rising: Living Our Present through the Power of Our Past*, ed. Yvonne Boyer and Larry N. Chartrand (Vancouver, British Columbia: Purich Books, 2022), 13–28.

the Métis to access the northwest and move further into the prairies.[176] In relation to the river system, Dorion describes the lobstick poles that were a way of culturally marking traditional land, guiding Métis traders along the mouths of the rivers marking inlet channels. These lobstick poles marked Métis presence in the region.[177] Waterways are also discussed by Brenda Macdougall in her study of Sakitawakin the nineteenth century. She signals how the Métis community began on the shores but radiated outward, linking waterways to the establishment of the community and economy in the region.[178] Nicole St-Onge's seminal book on St. Laurent Manitoba, 1850-1914, also discusses how geography, class, and waterways were linked to Métis identity, highlighting fishing and salt production as Métis economies reliant on the waterways of the region.[179] Taken together, the Dumonts settling along the river was part of a tradition of Métis settlements connected to riverways, and Gabriel's ferry relied on that same knowledge of the landscape to be successful. The ferry business was established in a way that allowed the community to benefit as much as Gabriel and Madeleine.

Gabriel's community also recognized the value of the ferry and helped him obtain a licence in 1878. While the ferry was Gabriel's business, it was a resource for the entire community and provided them with easy access to trade routes and brought people through the region, increasing economic opportunities for the businesses being established. However, an 1877 NWT Council ordinance afforded Lieutenant-Governor David Laird the right to determine at any time to

> establish one or more Ferries upon any of the Rivers in the North-West Territories, and to issue Licenses to any person or persons for any period not exceeding three years, granting the exclusive right to ferry over the same during the time, at the place, and within the limits specified and described in such License, and upon such terms, including the amount to be paid for such License and the security to be given, and such other arrangements as may to him seem just.[180]

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[176] Dorion and Breaton, 13.
[177] Dorion and Breaton, 24.
[178] Macdougall, *One of the Family*.
[179] Nicole St-Onge, *Saint-Laurent, Manitoba: Evolving Métis Identities, 1850-1914*, edition (University of Regina Press, 2004).
[180] David Laird, "Ferry License 1878," March 1, 1878, r 195-3, Saskatchewan Archives Board.

It is likely that Canada was interested in ensuring the Dominion Government's ease of movement between forts, prompting the new permit system. They recognized the power that control over these routes afforded people such as Gabriel, and that with no regulations in place ferry owners could limit access to certain parties through drastic price increases. As such, the licence determined prices for the expected types of loads, with maximum tolls allowed, and a note that double the rates could be charged after sunset or before sunrise if the licensee saw fit to do so.[181] However, it appears that Gabriel negotiated additional conditions to benefit his community. Handwritten under the list of maximum rates (section 5) is "Persons desiring to go to and return from religious services, on Sunday between 9 O'clock a.m. and 2 O'clock p.m, shall be ferried free of charge."[182] Here, Gabriel is ensuring that the needs of the community are met through his ferry business, following the principles of wahkootowin. The addition of this being handwritten implies that this was not a request that the Canadian government had foreseen and further shows this was likely added at the request of Gabriel. The licence also required Gabriel to provide a

> [b]ond with two approved sureties in penalties against the Licensee of one thousand Dollars, and each surety in five hundred Dollars conditioned for the faithful performance of the conditions herein before set forth in every respect, and upon the death, removal from the Territories or insolvency of any surety, substitute another similar Bond with the like conditions and within the time named for such purpose …[183]

This was a large sum of money, especially compared to the annual licence fee of five dollars, which itself was substantial. Because of wahkootowin, wealthier family members were expected to help the financing of trade ventures.[184] As such, though community members Antoine Bergeron and François Laberge were not related to Gabriel they agreed to act as surety for Gabriel.[185] They were invested in his success and must have considered this venture to be beneficial to the St. Laurent de Grandin community because their financing was an expectation to

[181] Laird.
[182] Laird.
[183] Laird.
[184] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves': A Political History of Métis Self-Determination in the North-West, 1830-1870," 91–92.
[185] Laird, "Ferry License 1878."

their Métis kin under wahkootowin. This willingness to invest in the community also reveals a sense of permanence; as community members developed St. Laurent, they supported each other in their ventures, acknowledging that individual accomplishments were linked to communal success. The ferry may have been an economic venture for the Dumont family, but its establishment was rooted in Métis understandings of kinship responsibilities.

KA TIPAYITUHK SOON TAYRAYN- PROPERTY

Métis understanding of territory included a collective sense of access while protecting individual rights to property. This dualistic concept of property is expressed in the buffalo hunt and permanent settlements such as St. Laurent de Grandin and is rooted in wahkootowin. As discussed earlier in this chapter, settlement was not new to the Métis, but the development of St. Laurent de Grandin illustrates how the community embodied their dual understanding of land and represented Métis culture and identity. In Lisa Schaub's examination of Norbert Welsh's life and movement through the Métis homelands, she argues that depending on the stage of his life, Welsh's conception of land shifted between European ideas of private property and Indigenous notions of open access.[186] For example, Schaub uses Welsh's upbringing in Red River as an illustration of his understanding of private property. Schaub refers to the practice of hay privilege on sections considered common property. These 'commons' were intended to allow multiple families to cut hay from one plot that was often an additional two miles of land located behind a riverlot. While the 'commons' was considered community property, once hay was cut it became a person's asset. However, Welsh describes his family's estate as being four miles long, not two, implying that he felt this common area was in fact part of his family's individual property, something later recognized by the Council of Assiniboia.[187] Schaub then uses Welsh's time as a buffalo hunter in the 1860s/70s to describe what she considered an Indigenous influenced open access property regime.[188] As earlier described, Welsh saw buffalo as a resource available to anyone until a person's labour was included, such as hunting and butchering. At that time, it was considered that individual's property.[189] I deepen this argument by illustrating, instead, that the

[186] Schaub, "Reconstructing Métis Territoriality and Identity."
[187] Schaub, 96–98.
[188] Schaub, 102–4.
[189] Schaub, 102-4.

Métis did not shift between these two conceptions but instead embraced both concepts at once though they were expressed in different ways depending on the circumstance.

The Métis aimed to protect an individual's right to certain land and resources in a way that benefitted the broader community. This understanding of rights to land and resources is seen in both the mobile communities of the buffalo hunt and the more permanent settlements such as St. Laurent de Grandin. Further, this conceptualization was part of their Métis identity as Métis ethnogenesis occurred in a territory occupied by others; they considered themselves stewards of the land and its resources and believed in individual rights. Adam Gaudry relates these practices in Métis settlements as also being part of kaa-tipeyimishoyaahk, as it provided "family self-ownership, by ensuring that families could maintain an independent way of life, living on the land," while maintaining the principles of responsibilities as required through wahkootowin.[190] The Métis comprehended the importance of creating boundaries to respect an individual's space and property. The Métis established laws to protect individuals' property rights, while also protecting the community, aligning with wahkootowin.[191]

This dual understanding of property as collective and individually held can be seen in the resolutions created with the establishment of St. Laurent de Grandin. As with the buffalo hunt, these regulations helped ensure peaceful existence between the community members and allowed the group to establish laws regarding matters they foresaw conflict. The community members who helped develop the laws determined that only chiefs (male heads of a family) had the right to a tract of two miles in length and a quarter-mile wide.[192] This regulation reflects Métis gender roles. Métis society was outwardly patriarchal in organization, male heads of household being recognized rather than women. To an outsider this could appear like western patriarchy. However, unlike in western patriarchy, women's importance within the community is not ignored nor is it seen as less important than men. However, that does not mean that there were not power

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[190] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 92.
[191] An example of this can be seen in the rules of the buffalo hunt, which were altered with every hunt. Préfontaine and Young, "Bison Hunting"; "Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan," 1873, St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan, Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent, Métis Museum / Gabriel Dumont Institute, http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/12631.
[192] "Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan."

imbalances. As Emma LaRoque argues, while these traditional gender roles are often described to be of equitable power, however, power imbalances did exist that privileged Métis men, especially as interpreted by the settler state. This imbalance would only be furthered with increased interactions with the settler state in the region.[193] Cheryl Troupe's work on Métis women discusses that while women did not have direct political power, they were well respected within the community and could assert their political influence, including by withholding labour. For example, the buffalo hunt both genders had complementary socio-economic roles. Cecelia Boyer, Norbert Welsh's wife refused to process buffalo that was not hunted with traditional protocols, demonstrating her displeasure with the decisions made by the male hunters.[194] However, male heads of households is an expression of Métis masculinity that was influenced by their European ancestors. This patriarchal structure was also a system that was accepted by the colonial state, showing how Métis masculinity was formed through the influence of colonialism.[195] This is especially evident in the Métis community of Red River, in which the colony was surveyed by HBC workers and this established the system used by many Métis communities, including St. Laurent de Grandin.[196] The male heads of households along with the riverlot system was a patriarchal structure, but the way in which community regulations were established followed Métis concepts of land access influenced by wahkootowin.

Assigning land to male heads of households, acknowledged that each family had the right to claim a space within the community as theirs. The expectation being that all in the community will respect those boundaries. One of the first resolutions the St. Laurent de Grandin community adopted pertained to managing disagreements over the limits and boundaries of lands between neighbours by creating a commission to settle land disputes. Additionally, anyone who

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[193] Emma LaRoque, "Metis and Feminist: Contemplations on Feminism, Human Rights, Culture and Decolonization," in *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism, 2nd Edition*, ed. Joyce Green (Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2020), 173–204.
[194] Cheryl Lynn Troupe, "Métis Women: Social Structure, Urbanization and Political Activism, 1850-1980" (Masters Thesis, Saskatoon, Sk, University of Saskatchewan, 2009):62, http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/etd-12112009-150223.
[195] Brendan Hokowhitu, "Producing Elite Indigenous Masculinities," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 23–48, https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2012.10648840.
[196] Schaub, "Reconstructing Métis Territoriality and Identity," 96.

encroached on a neighbour's land had to pay a fine of five shillings per day.[197] The community agreed to the resolutions to protect each family's property, ensuring a fair allotment of land, while simultaneously ensuring the health of the wider community. Gaudry discusses the homesteads and parishes of Red River as an Indigenous relationship to territory, noting the land was "once by [Indigenous] title, twice for defending them at the cost of their blood, and thrice for having cultivated, fenced and lived on them."[198] As such, Gaudry asserts that the Métis "created a common language for the legitimate possession of land, and the expression of political authority over that land" that acknowledged the individual family's occupation of their riverlot.[199] In Red River, a lot was marked off by "putting stakes in the ground, cutting blazes on the trees, or plowing a furrow around the edge. They might also erect a roofless square of logs as a sign of intended future occupation."[200] As such, Métis understandings of property in the settlements demonstrates the same concepts of rights to resources shown in the buffalo hunt but expressed in a way that suited the context of the permanent settlement.

The community also developed laws that protected the area's resources; thus, while the Métis were creating individual plots of land, they also understood the importance of their stewardship over the earth and its resources. For instance, they established laws regarding the rights to harvest wood, a resource provided by the land that was necessary to build homes, cook, and stay warm. They illustrated stewardship over this resource by limiting access to it to ensure its long-term availability for the community and to restrict overuse. Only trees that could be used within two weeks could be felled, or all access to wood was revoked as punishment, and if a tract of land was not occupied within six months, the whole community had access to the land and its resources.[201] By requiring harvesters to be settled on the land, the community required residency, and therefore a commitment to the development of the lot, strengthening the community's claims to the area. This was especially necessary with increasing numbers of settlers moving into the northwest. Métis laws around land and resources demonstrated their understanding of the

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[197] "Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan."
[198] Riel, quoted in Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 122.
[199] Gaudry, 122.
[200] Gaudry, 123–24.
[201] "Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan."

settlement being both individual and communal. They understood the necessity of allowing individual rights to land, but they also ensured the health of the land for the benefit of the entire community. This responsibility to maintain the land is another act of kinship that aligns with wahkootowin, as wahkootowin acknowledges relationship to everything, not just people. The Dumont family's involvement in the development of St. Laurent de Grandin shows that the family's understanding of the land and its resources were an integral part of their Métis identity, and the expression of their rights to land was grounded in wahkootowin.

CONCLUSION

The prairies gave rise to the unique circumstances that allowed the Métis to develop their own culture and identity. This chapter has shown how the Dumont family's lives on the plains and their identity were shaped, in part, through the land. The previous chapter revealed how kinship incorporated the Dumont family into established Métis families. This chapter has demonstrated that kinship also spread the Dumonts across the plains, away from the area in which the first generation was born and raised. Thus, the Dumont family expanded their understanding of home to all the Métis homelands, not just the region in which they lived at the time. The marriages of the first generation of Dumonts took them to some key Métis settlements, including Red River, Pembina, and Mânitow Sâkahikanihk. These marriages brought them into Métis families, where Métis women's knowledge and kinship networks helped them establish lives in Métis communities, expanding their concept of home beyond the region Jean-Baptiste and Josephte lived.

While kinship took the Dumont family across the plains, their livelihoods ultimately shaped their identity, and their Métis identity shaped their economic opportunities. The Dumont family's economic ventures, including the buffalo hunt, required them to understand the land. By all reports, the family was quite successful in this, forging long careers as buffalo hunt chiefs, freighters, and guides, all of which required a deep understanding of the land and the people who occupied it. The life decisions of the Dumont family also affected how they lived upon the land. Like many Métis people, they adapted to the options available to them, depending on what was ideal for their family. They moved between settled and mobile lifestyles, and between different economic ventures. Between their livelihood options and kinship, these three generations of the Dumont family expanded their view of home beyond the Saskatchewan Valley where they were

born to include the majority of the Métis homelands. They gained a deep understanding of these lands and how to live upon it, inherited from their elders and Métis mentors.

Through both their mobile and settled lives on the land, the Métis people had a unique understanding of rights to the land and its resources. They acknowledged that their territory overlapped with that of others, and they forged alliances with some and, at times, engaged in battles with others. By following the Dumonts' lives through the lens of geography, aspects of Métis identity and culture is revealed: communities in which the Dumonts lived—buffalo hunts, hivernants, and settlements—all acknowledged a concept of communal and individual rights to the property. Furthermore, in comparison to a Western approach to ownership, this understanding of land meant that they recognized an individual's right to their own space, but not to the detriment of the community or the land. However, within this system, Métis men were privileged over Métis women as they were recognized as the head of household and as such claimed the right to land within Métis communities. Therefore, Métis masculinity in connection to territory demonstrates the influence of colonial heteropatriarchy. While Métis women were not subjugated by communities and were well respected, their lack of rights to land allowed them to be further removed from land rights by the settler state, giving privilege to Métis men in this regard. Overall, this chapter has illustrated how the Dumont moved across the land, how they understood the land deeply, and knew it as home.

3- Nutr Chef- Our Chief

When I think of Gabriel Dumont, I think of [a] natural leader who lived for his people.

Trevor Cameron- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[1]

There is no doubt that by the time Gabriel was an adult, the Dumont family identified as Métis,[2] and were accepted by others as Métis, and their roles as leaders are a symbol of this. Gabriel's role as a leader is also an important aspect of why his memory has become part of Métis historical consciousness. As Trevor Cameron comments above, leadership is an important aspect of Gabriel's life that has been promoted within Métis historical consciousness. However, we know very little about how Gabriel became a leader and maintained this position for much of his life. Scholars have only recently begun to examine historical Indigenous conceptualisation of leadership. Within the Métis context, there is room for greater understanding of what leadership meant to these communities in the nineteenth century. Métis leadership is embedded within the broader category of Métis governance and as Dubois and Saunders note both "can contribute to our understanding of the evolution of Métis identity…."[3] This chapter uses Gabriel as a subject to analyse the characteristics and skills historical elected Métis leaders embodied and how leadership was developed within Métis culture. In doing so, this chapter adds to the understanding of Métis identity as evidenced within Gabriel's life.

Gabriel's long leadership record, and his connection to several key Métis events, offers an opportunity to examine the ways in which Métis leaders operated, the skills and characteristics they embodied, and how leadership is connected to Métis identity. This chapter uses three specific situations in Gabriel Dumont's life to delineate how Métis leadership was given authority through Métis governance structures. First this chapter looks at the buffalo hunt and

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[1] Trevor Cameron, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, January 24, 2020.
[2] There are several written instances of Gabriel Dumont referring to himself and his community as Métis, Dumont, Gabriel. "Letter from Gabriel Dumont September 10 1884," September 10, 1884. P5998/2. Provincial Archives of Manitoba; Dumont, Gabriel. "Letter," October 19, 1887. R82-647. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan; Dumont, Gabriel. "Letter," October 31, 1887. R82-647. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan; Dumont, Gabriel. "Letter," October 31, 1887. R82-647. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan; Lawrence Clarke, "Letter from Carlton House," July 10, 1875, Alexander Morris Fonds, Archives of Manitoba.
[3] Kelly Saunders and Janique Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, Reprint edition (UBC Press, 2019), II.

Gabriel's role as buffalo hunt chief. Next, I explore how Métis people adapted the democratic election process from the buffalo hunt to meet the needs of the community of St. Laurent de Grandin, where Gabriel was elected as president. Lastly, this chapter turns to the events of 1885 and the North West Resistance and the conflict with the Dominion of Canada. Numerous histories of the Resistance have been written. This chapter is not attempting to explore these events in depth, but rather, to look at how Métis processes and conceptions of leadership were demonstrated in the events leading up to the Resistance. In these examples I demonstrate the important influence of kinship and mentorship and argue that Métis communities elected leaders through a democratic process based on their ability to meet the community's needs, and those leaders fulfilled this role through the responsibilities of wahkootowin. Moreover, I suggest that understanding who the community chose to lead, and how, adds another layer to our understanding of Métis identity.

MÉTIS LEADERSHIP

Overall, Métis Studies has focused on governance more so than leadership, two connected yet distinct aspects of Métis culture. Governance provides the framework in which leaders are chosen and held accountable and gives the authority to leaders to make decisions. Leaders are the individuals who support effective governance by enacting the vision of the community.[4] As such, Métis leadership is often only indirectly discussed in broader histories of Métis politics and governance. For instance, Adam Gaudry's work on the formation of Manitoba, in which he argues the Manitoba Act was a treaty with the Métis people, focuses on politics and governance, in part discusses leadership processes.[5] Kelly Saunders and Janique Dubois' book, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, tracks the continuation of Métis governance from the buffalo hunt to contemporary times focusing on regional and national political organizations.[6] More directly concentrating on leaders, academic biographies, such as those written about Louis Riel and

[4] Pippa Lord et al., "Narrowing the Gap in Outcomes: What Is the Relationship between Leadership and Governance?" (National Foundation for Educational Research, 2009), https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/1939/lgg01.pdf.
[5] Adam Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk – 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves': A Political History of Métis Self-Determination in the North-West, 1830–1870" (Dissertation, Victoria, University of Victoria, 2014).
[6] Saunders and Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*.

Cuthbert Grant, often made use of the "great man" biography approach.[7] While these biographies chronicled these leaders' lives, they do not delve into the unique cultural characteristics of their leadership.[8] Furthermore, scholarship with an emphasis on contemporary leadership frequently uses a pan-Indigenous lens, combining Métis people with other Indigenous groups. For instance, Tanya Halsall and Tanya Forneris' examination of contemporary youth leadership programs combines First Nations, Inuit, and Métis leadership.[9] This does not acknowledge that Métis culture has its own understandings of leadership that may or may not align with other Indigenous cultures'.

A new biography approach can offer a deeper understanding of historical Indigenous leaders' lives by not just looking at what Gabriel Dumont did as a leader but rather exploring what his life can tell us about Métis leadership beyond his own actions. For instance, Max Hamon's recent biography on Louis Riel demonstrates how his upbringing, family connections, and education all shaped his leadership. Thus, Hamon not only provides a chronological account of Louis Riel's life, but also allows the reader to understand important factors that ultimately shaped him into an effective leader in the Red River Resistance.[10] Similarly, this chapter uses

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[7] Traditional biographies tend to adopt a positivist and often-patriotic approach. John French, "Social History and the Study of 'Great Men'? *Hispanic American Historical Review*, William Spence Robertson (1872–1956), and the Disciplinary Debate About Biography," *Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de La Cultura* 40, no. 1 Esp. (March 1, 2013): 99–138; Margaret Arnett MacLeod, W. L. Morton, and Alice R. Brown, *Cuthbert Grant of Grantown: Warden of the Plains of Red River*, 2014, http://www.deslibris.ca/ID/448058; Thomas Flanagan, *Louis "David" Riel: Prophet of the New World* (Formac Publishing Company Limited, 1983).
[8] Non-academic biographies and autobiographies do exist on Métis leaders, such as this publication on Howard Adams. Adams' autobiography, which combines his own writings with those of his contemporaries, steps away from traditional biography and centres Mètis conceptions of his life. Howard Adams, *Howard Adams: Otapawy!: The Life of a Métis Leader in His Own Words and in Those of His Contemporaries*, ed. Hartmut Lutz, Murray Hamilton, and Donna Heimbecker (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2005).
[9] Tanya Halsall and Tanya Forneris, "Evaluation of a Leadership Program for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Youth: Stories of Positive Youth Development and Community Engagement," *Applied Developmental Science* 22, no. 2 (April 3, 2018): 125–38, https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2016.1231579.
[10] M. Max Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise: Louis Riel and the Métis Nation That Canada Never Was, 1840–1875* (Montreal; Kingston; London; Chicago: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020).

Gabriel's life to develop further understanding of Métis leadership processes and what historical Métis communities sought in an elected leader.

Most notably, in the literature it is apparent that women were excluded from elected positions until the mid-twentieth century.[11] However, this does not mean that women did not hold influential positions in their communities and families, and Métis scholars such as Cheryl Troupe and Allyson Stevenson have begun exploring the influence of Métis women. However, there is limited information on their leadership roles before the 1885 Resistance.[12] Troupe and Stevenson note that traditional historical accounts of Indigenous women's political activism in Saskatchewan are rare.[13] In her thesis, Troupe delineates how Métis women in nineteenth-century communities had little direct political power; instead, their role was to support the male leaders of the community. Although, as Troupe notes, Cecile Boyer was known to lead her own buffalo hunts, this was unusual in the period. Formal limitations did not prevent Métis women from influencing others, and they held their own positions of power within the community and family.[14] For instance, in some cases, women exerted this power by withholding their contributions, such as the processing of buffalo, to express their discontent regarding issues.[15] At other times, according to Hamon, women explicitly spoke out. For example, when Charles Mair published unfavourable opinions in a Toronto paper that spoke about the "'half-breeds' and the women," it angered the women of Red River, and 'one lady pulled the poet's nose, while another used her fingers rudely about his ears. A third, confining herself to words, said his letters would be productive of serious mischief by circulating doubts about the reality of the destitution [in the settlement].'"[16] In this example, these women acted to safeguard the community's reputation and, while not elected as leaders, voiced their opinions about leadership's actions. Thus, women also

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[11] Cheryl Troupe, "Mapping Métis Stories: Land Use, Gender and Kinship in the Qu'Appelle Valley, 1850–1950" (2019), 71, http://hdl.handle.net/10388/12122.
[12] Cheryl Troupe and Allyson Stevenson, "From Kitchen Tables to Formal Organization: Indigenous Women's Social and Political Activism in Saskatchewan to 1980." In *Compelled to Act: Histories of Women's Activism in Western Canada*, ed. Sarah Carter and Nanci Langford (University of Manitoba Press, 2020), 218–52.
[13] Troupe and Stevenson, "From Kitchen Tables to Formal Organization," 218–52.
[14] Troupe, "Métis Women," 61.
[15] Norbert Welsh and Mary Weekes, *The Last Buffalo Hunter* (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1994), 71–72; Troupe, "Métis Women," 62.
[16] Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise*, 146.

had essential roles within the community, economically, culturally, and—somewhat indirectly—politically. Métis culture, however, restricted women's opportunities within Métis governance as elected leadership roles were limited to men. This aspect of Métis governance is likely owed to the influence of Euro-Canadian forefathers and the patriarchal structure of the Church and fur trade economy in Métis ethnogenesis.[17] However, while excluded from formal Métis leadership roles, there is not the same lack of acknowledgement of the importance of women to the community as seen in Western patriarchy. In addition, women were vital in connecting families through kinship, and this network was essential to Métis leadership.[18] This chapter's focus is on elected leadership; however, I acknowledge the importance of the women's work and how they influenced the men in elected positions while being excluded from those positions. Exclusions from elected leadership had long lasting impacts for Métis women, especially as increased interaction with the settler state occurred through the end of the nineteenth century. Additionally, this chapter does not explore leadership at the family level. Elected leadership was a system that was enacted in certain circumstances, such as those explored in this chapter.

In addition to the role of wahkootowin within leadership, I also incorporate the leadership work of Timothy Earle. Earle created a theoretical framework for exploring leadership within chiefdoms, which he defines as kin based societies that are larger extended family networks. Earle uses three cases in different periods (Denmark 2300-1300 B.C.E, the Andes 500-1534 C.E., and Hawaii 800-1824 C.E.), and Jeffry McClellan has applied this framework to precolonial Ecuador to demonstrate its usefulness for understanding leadership in different Indigenous

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[17] Brendan Hokowhitu, "Producing Elite Indigenous Masculinities," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 23–48, https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2012.10648840.

[18] Several biographies are currently available on Métis women, which illustrates their important role within the Métis family and community. Darren R. Préfontaine, *Changing Canadian History: The Life and Works of Olive Patricia Dickason* (Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2021); Louise Moine, *Remembering Will Have to Do: The Life and Times of Louise (Trottier) Moine* (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2013); Gregory A. Scofield, *I Knew Two Métis Women: The Lives of Dorothy Scofield and Georgina Houle Young* (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, 2009); Doris Jeanne MacKinnon, *The Identities of Marie Rose Delorme Smith: Portrait of a Métis Woman, 1861–1960* (University of Regina Press, 2012); MacKinnon, *Metis Pioneers*.

cultures.[19] Earle asserts that in all societies some people will seek prestige and positions of leadership.[20] Each culture has its own method for allowing an emergent elite (leaders who gain prestige) to come to power. Earle's goal of discovering what allows aspiring leaders to succeed in some situations but fail in others provides a good grounding for understanding Métis leadership.[21] Earle defines four areas of power (mastery) that a potential leader uses to develop their authority as leader: social relationships (kinship), economic, military might, and ideology (culture). Kinship is where relationships are defined by cultural relationships which "determine rights and obligations that represent power over people and political individuals manipulate these relationships (by strategic marriages, adoptions, godfathering, and the like) to centralize and extend power."[22] Economic power is a person's ability to control exchange or buy compliance through the deprivations and materials rewards. Military might creates a coerced or forced compliance and is seen in the significance of warfare for creating or extending a ruler's region. Lastly Earle refers to ideological power, this contains the social codes of order, the social and political organizational structure of the society. Earle notes ideological power as an important support of leadership, it is the cultural understandings of leadership that support and provide authority to leaders.[23] While Earle sees these as areas in which a leader exerts power over his or her people to remain in control, I propose these are instead areas in which leaders needed to be especially talented and experienced in, for the community to choose them as an elected leader. The culture of the Métis, grounded in wahkootowin, required leaders to give back to their community because their expertise in these areas benefited the group more so than the community benefitted the leader. These areas of mastery (power) required Métis men to be providers, protectors, and mentors, to if they were to be recognized by the community as an elected Métis leader.[24] While this chapter explores these concepts in connection with Métis

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[19] Timothy K. Earle, *How Chiefs Come to Power: The Political Economy in Prehistory* (Stanford University Press, 1997); Jeffrey L. McClellan, "Precolonial Indigenous Leadership: Exploring the Foundations of Leadership Culture in Ecuador," *Leadership and the Humanities* 5, no. 1 (June 2017): 5–18, https://doi.org/10.4337/lath.2017.01.01.
[20] Earle, *How Chiefs Come to Power*, 2.
[21] Earle, 2.
[22] Earle, 5.
[23] Earle, 5–10.
[24] Kim Anderson, Robert Alexander Innes, and John Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities: Carrying the Bones of the Ancestors," in *Canadian Men and Masculinities: Historical and Contemporary*

masculinity and elected leadership, it should be noted that Métis women also acted as protectors (of the family, territory and knowledge), providers (for their families and the community through their labour and knowledge), and mentors (passing on knowledge, ceremony, and skills to the youth) However, Métis elected leadership protocols excluded these contributions and did not allow Métis women to be elected into leadership positions. Combined, the life of Gabriel Dumont demonstrates how Métis leadership required mastery of economic and military skills while being grounded in kinship and supported through Métis governance.

Métis leadership was entrenched in the Métis democratic process, which was an integral part of being Métis, and granted authority to Métis leaders. Most scholars trace this democratic process to the buffalo hunt, which required a more formal structure as the hunts grew. This governance structure was mirrored in both settled communities and provisional governments.[25] This democratic process reflected a shared commitment to the principles of democracy and rule of law.[26] Janique Dubois and Kelly Saunders explore democracy: Ka Niikaaniichik, and its role in Métis governance. They identify three types of democratic processes in which leadership is assigned: "deliberative, direct, and representative."[27] Deliberative democracy is historically represented in the assemblies connected to the buffalo hunt to choose leaders or allow collective decision making.[28] To begin each buffalo hunt, an assembly was held where leadership candidates worked to gather support and families deliberated on who to vote for. The assembly also collectively set the rules for the buffalo hunt or laws in settlements.[29] Assemblies could lead to direct democracy such as the elections of leadership positions.[30] In this process individuals who were elected by the community were chosen because the community recognized their leadership capabilities, and, through their election, they were given authority that made them

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Perspectives, ed. Wayne Martino and Christopher J. Greig (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2012), 266–84.

[25] Saunders and Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*; Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk – 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'"; Zoe Todd, "From a Fishy Place: Examining Canadian State Law Applied in the Daniels Decision from the Perspective of Métis Legal Orders," *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 36 (2016): 43–57, https://doi.org/10.3138/topia.36.43.

[26] Saunders and Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, 18–36.

[27] Saunders and Dubois, 45.

[28] Saunders and Dubois, 45.

[29] Saunders and Dubois, 45–46.

[30] Saunders and Dubois, 47.

accountable to the community.[31] The community's needs could shift according to external factors—settled versus mobile, or peace versus war—and, as such, the leader at the time changed to whomever best met these needs. Dubois and Saunders also refer to representative democracy, how each household had a voice within assemblies to ensure unity in the group.[32] This representational democracy functioned both in the buffalo hunt and in settlements, the latter including representatives from each parish rather than each family.[33] While formal leadership was not always necessary, and it was only implemented when the community comprised large numbers of people to provide structure and reduce tensions, these tenets of democracy can be seen in various aspects of Métis governance.[34]

The Buffalo Hunt

Well, they were good shots, right? They were sharpshooters.

Terry Laroque- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[35]

The buffalo hunt was central to the lives of many Métis during the nineteenth century, encapsulating Métis economy, culture, governance, and kinship. In addition, this was where the Métis election process was developed, making it an excellent cultural event through which to explore Métis leadership. As Terry Laroque observes, the buffalo hunt required special skills, and the families that became known for their buffalo hunt abilities, like the Dumonts, did so through their keen skills, including shooting. These aptitudes would have the Dumont men stand out within the buffalo hunts and aid their move into the buffalo hunt leadership.

By the early nineteenth century, the buffalo hunt shifted from individual hunters and small families to the large hunting groups for which the Métis are best known, necessitating a formal governance structure to maintain order.[36] The buffalo hunt council existed in a limited political capacity within the authority the Métis community gave it, and this authority could be removed.[37] First-person accounts of the Métis buffalo hunt through the mid- to late-nineteenth

[31] Earle, *How Chiefs Come to Power*, 3.
[32] Saunders and Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, 49.
[33] Saunders and Dubois, 49.
[34] Saunders and Dubois, 50.
[35] Terry Laroque, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 6, 2019.
[36] Gerhard John Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland*, 38–43.
[37] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 86.

century by Gabriel Dumont, Alexander Ross, Norbert Welsh, Peter Erasmus, and John Kerr provide insight into how Métis hunt-leadership functioned, illustrating that the hunt itself is an important cultural and historical aspect of Métis life.[38] Through these descriptions, we learn that each hunt was unique; the groups that hunted together and the time of year during which the hunt took place were always changing. Moreover, more than one hunting group existed on the plains. Each brigade could combine Métis, First Nations, and European or Canadian—into one massive hunt to help prevent attacks from enemies. Because each hunt consisted of a unique combination of people, the brigade's elected leadership had to ensure that the elected leader, council, and laws at the time met the needs of the group.

The buffalo hunt provides some of the earliest examples of Métis governance and leadership. Adam Gaudry argues the buffalo hunt necessitated a political language for Métis people to "communicate their familial best interest and used kaa-tipeyimishoyaahk to this end. However, this shared sense of kaa-tipeyimishoyaahk …. Ensured that Métis government was non-coercive, decentralized, and created spontaneously to purposefully meet very specific needs."[39] Additionally the hunt represented the Métis way of generating "large-scale collective undertakings" a socio-cultural representation of themselves as a nation and a people.[40] Gaudry asserts that the buffalo hunt "allowed Métis to understand themselves as 'an entire population on the march,' as kin, possessing a common origin and a common future" while also creating a common basis for Métis politics.[41] As such, the buffalo hunt provides the opportunity to explore how leadership functioned in this important aspect of Métis life so directly tied to Métis identity.

The Métis democratic process was used to elect leadership in the buffalo hunt, governance providing authority to leadership. The assembly called at the beginning of each hunt

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[38] Peter Erasmus, Buffalo Days and Nights: As Told to Henry Thompson, Western Canadian Classics (Calgary: Fifth House Publishers, 1999); Alexander Ross, *The Red River Settlement: Its Rise, Progress, and Present State, with Some Account of the Native Races and its General History to the Present Day* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1856), http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/qPy5X; Constance Kerr Sissons, John Kerr (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946).
[39] Gaudry defines kaa-tipeyimishoyaahk as they own or govern themselves including independence and self-sufficiency. Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 85–86.
[40] Gaudry, 103.
[41] Gaudry, 103.

allowed input from each family as every head of household (male) voted. Gaudry provides detailed analysis of the buffalo hunt election process based on the description of Peter Erasmus. While it is possible that this represents most Métis election processes, it likely varied according to the situation. Potential leaders delivered a speech, after which his supporters canvased the families of the camp. Once all leaders had their opportunities to argue their skills as a leader and the families had deliberated, a vote was held for the hunt chief.[42] Erasmus describes that each voter received two sticks to place in a bag, each stick (short or long) represented a candidate, and while the results were announced, the actual count remained confidential to prevent embarrassment.[43] The elected chief then appointed his council, totalling twelve people, which represented every major family within the group—including those who had potentially not voted for him—ensuring that the entire community was adequately represented. Gaudry states that the number twelve was important in the Métis culture and was rooted in their nominal Catholicism, as Jesus had twelve disciples, creating a political structure that blended both Indigenous and Catholic cosmology.[44] While the chief remained the primary authority figure of the camp, the other leadership positions were filled in a rotating basis from prominent Métis.[45] Gaudry notes this was a safeguard against power being invested in one single person. Additionally, once the council was established only a single person maintained authority for a few hours at a time.[46] The council then created laws rooted in Métis values, including "freedom, kinship, democracy, the rule of law, and provisionality."[47] The council acted as the representatives of the broader community and adjudicated disputes. The primary leadership position of the buffalo hunt chief held the most authority, which allowed him to overrule council decisions. However, his authority was not absolute, such as when the caravan was on the move, guides in charge of the caravan in that moment could overrule the chief's decisions. This shift in authority was signaled by the guide being given the camp's flag, a physical representation of the trust of the camp in that

[42] Gaudry, 99.
[43] Other records do not provide this level of description on the voting process so it each election could be slightly different. For instance, here two sticks are used, but it is possible that any object that allowed consistent variation could be used, depending on what was easily accessible and the number of candidates. Gaudry, 99.
[44] Gaudry, 99–100.
[45] Gaudry, 104.
[46] Gaudry, 105.
[47] Saunders and Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, 22.

guide's knowledge of the land to lead the camp's movement, allowing the chief to remain responsible for the camp's safety.[48] The result was a democratic system that, while organized as a patriarchal structure in which men functioned as the elected officials and voices of the households, elected the best male leader for the situation at the time, and the entire community could have input on decisions and laws.

Because of the structure of the Métis democratic process, kinship was an important aspect of someone becoming and remaining a leader within their community. Gaudry delineates how mentorship was an important part of the buffalo hunt culture, as younger community members were apprenticed by older family members to learn the craft of the buffalo hunt.[49] The result of the mentorship was that each family member had specific responsibilities that were learned from the older generation and contributed to the success of the buffalo hunt. Mentorship and each person's role held understandings of wahkootowin.[50] As such, mentorship influenced someone's leadership skills, and opportunity to step into elected positions. Gabriel grew up in the buffalo hunt and learned the skills of the hunt from his older family members. But he also was surrounded by family who held leadership roles, including his father, Ekapow, uncles (Nampesh and Ska-kas-ta-ow), and father-in-law, Jean-Baptiste Wilkie. Ekapow was a buffalo hunt chief based in Round Plain, just northeast of the mouth of the Red Deer River, voted into the position replacing Pierre Gariépy in 1854.[51] Ekapow also hunted with Jean-Baptiste Wilkie's brigade.[52] As a first generation of Dumonts born in the northwest, Ekapow's move into leadership signals to his Métis identity and acceptance by Métis people as a part of their community. He was gaining a reputation for himself as a leader who defied restrictions placed by the HBC regarding the hunt. In 1849, Ekapow, amongst several other Métis including Louis Batoche, Joseph Dauphinais, Emmanuel Champagne, Hyacinthe Parisien, Abraham Bélanger, sold to both the HBC and the

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[48] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 105.
[49] Gaudry, 117.
[50] Gaudry, 117.
[51] Gabriel Dumont, *Gabriel Dumont, Mémoires: les Mémoires dictés par Gabriel Dumont et le Récit Gabriel Dumont*, ed. Denis P. Combet, trans. Lise Gaboury-Diallo (Saint-Boniface, Man: Éditions du Blé, 2006), 9.
[52] Welsh and Weekes, *The Last Buffalo Hunter*, 39–43; Ross, *The Red River Settlement*; Gabriel Dumont, Gabriel Dumont, *Mémoires*, 9.

American markets, raising concern within the HBC: who saw this as opposition.[53] This example demonstrates how Ekapow was aligning with decisions that were in the best interest of the Métis and his family. Ekapow's role in the hunts did not guarantee that Gabriel, one of many sons, automatically arose to this position, though he benefited from access to important skills training, not only in hunting, but also in being a hunt chief, which helped him to move into leadership roles. Charles Thompson notes that Gabriel was known as 'buffalo child' and that everything he learned to earn that name was because of how Ekapow, like most Métis, brought the entire family on the buffalo hunt.[54] For example, Norbert Welsh recalls that in a hunt led by Ekapow Gabriel was appointed as a scout (one of four that day) although he did not find any signs of buffalo that time.[55] While Gabriel was not lucky in locating buffalo his work as a scout under his father's leadership signals the mentorship that existed within the Dumont family regarding the buffalo hunt, and how Gabriel seemed to be gaining the skills necessary to take on this important role.

Gabriel would have also likely learned leadership skills from his uncles. Nampesh, quickly integrated himself into the community at Mânitow Sâkahikanihk with his marriage to Suzanne Lussier. His quick positioning by this community as leader demonstrates the reputation Nampesh, and likely all this generation of Dumonts had as effective leaders. Nampesh also was leader with this community as a buffalo hunt chief and president of a settlement. Experiences likely that would provide Gabriel knowledge that aided his move into leadership.

As mentioned earlier, Gabriel was also mentored by his future father-in-law Jean-Baptiste Wilkie. Jean-Baptiste Wilkie and Ekapow both were in leadership positions resisting against the HBC as well as in peace negotiations and times of conflict with the Dakota in connection to the annual bison hunt.[56] Gabriel's talent of buffalo calling and his talent as a "running taunter," someone who jumped and ran around the buffalo, made him interesting to Jean-Baptiste Wilkie and gave Gabriel the opportunity to develop further skills.[57] Jean-Baptiste remained a lifelong

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[53] "McGillivray to H. Fisher," November 17, 1853, Fisher-Deschambault Papers Correspondence and Genealogies, Saint Boniface Archives.
[54] Charles Duncan Thompson, *Red Sun: Gabriel Dumont, The Folk Hero*, 1st edition (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2017), 11.
[55] Welsh and Weekes, *The Last Buffalo Hunter*, 42.
[56] Krystl Raven, "Beyond the Battlefield: Gabriel Dumont and Métis Leadership (1837-1885)" (Masters Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2017), http://hdl.handle.net/10388/8075, chapt 3.
[57] Jawbone, Tsuu T'ina to Thompson (1944), Thompson, 16.

mentor of Gabriel's. The Wilkie hunt brigade was the largest at the time, a main provider to the HBC and Red River in the 1840-50's.[58] It was as a child, hunting with the Wilkie brigade, that Gabriel partook in the Battle of Grand Couteau, allowing him to see effective buffalo hunt chief leadership in a conflict. Both Wilkie and Ekapow took on important roles as leaders during this conflict, and Gabriel participated, despite his father's concerns over his young age.[59] The relationship that Gabriel created with Jean-Baptiste Wilkie, through mentorship, and then his marriage to Madeleine, established Gabriel as a successful hunt chief. In 1863, Jean-Baptiste Wilkie encouraged his followers to follow Gabriel, aged twenty-six, to Saskatchewan where they wintered near Touchwood Hills. Gabriel remained in this region hunting year round in addition to freighting at times with his own brigade or as part of his fathers. Throughout his childhood, Gabriel had the opportunity to be mentored by family and other hunt chiefs like Jean-Baptiste Wilkie. While his natural talent with calling and taunting buffalo was strengthened through this time, it was the mentorship of these men—grounded in wahkootowin—that supported his development as a leader. Teaching skills to the next generation helped preserve the Métis culture and enabled the younger men to support themselves and the broader community, creating a legacy of intergenerational leadership.

Métis leadership was supported and influenced by kinship but was not hereditary. Métis hunting brigades were based on extended family groups who voted to elect the hunt chief and council.[60] Therefore, these large, extended families could influence the elections through their number of votes. The result of this was that a hunt chief could be repeatedly elected year after year as the hunt brigade's make up of families remained mostly unchanged, however, the action of the democratic election process ensured that leadership held authority that was provided through the consent of each family.[61] As such, this socio-cultural organization of the hunt brigade emphasized kinship connections as the core structure for successful brigades, and successful leaders. For example, because the Dumont family often hunted together, their families created a

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[58] Thompson, 21–22.
[59] William Morton, "The Battle of Grand Coteau: July 13 and 14, 1851," in *Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1970), 45–59.
[60] Saunders and Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, 20; Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, "Rooted in Mobility: Metis Buffalo-Hunting Brigades," *Manitoba History*, no. 71 (2013): 21; Troupe, "Métis Women."
[61] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 97–98.

large portion of the hunt brigade. This helped ensure that their leadership was elected consistently. However, it did not guarantee it. The result was brigades that were often known for their hunt chief, while the make-up of the brigade altered each season, the extended family connected to the chief often remained quite stable. Jean-Baptiste Wilkie's brigade was supported by the Dumonts, who, while leaders of their own smaller brigades supported his election when they joined into the larger Wilkie brigade.[62] Later, when Gabriel formed his own brigade, his father, Ekapow, and his cousin Jean hunted as part of Gabriel's brigade.[63] Likely, Ekapow, was happy to pass on the torch of leadership to his son, while being able to support Gabriel by remaining as part of the brigade. Therefore, while the Métis political culture's concept of leadership was not hereditary, and was based on a democratic process, kinship played a key role through the established leaders' mentoring of the younger generations and the election of leadership being repeated through the years.

While kinship supported the development and election of leaders, Métis governance structures sought leaders who had the skills needed by the community and wahkootowin required those individuals to take on the role of leadership for the well-being of the broader community.[64] The brigades sought a buffalo hunt chief who could bring economic success, provide military power over those who were a threat to the brigade, and political skills to negotiate the socio-political context of the northwest. Locating the buffalo and leading a successful hunt were necessary requirements. A person's previous hunt success, demonstrated through different levels of leadership in connection to the hunt, provided proof of their skills in this regard and aided in their election into that position. A primary ability needed was locating the buffalo and successfully leading the brigade to the herd and through the hunt process. After locating the buffalo, camp was set, and the hunt chief led the group in a slow canter to a spot where they were upwind and hidden from the buffalo.[65] Hunt chiefs needed to know the land well enough to guide the group without the buffalo noticing them. Norbert Welsh relates how they took a specific route

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[62] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 25–27.
[63] This extended family support within Gabriel's hunt brigade remained as mentioned in the previous chapter to include the development of a more permanent settlement of St. Laurent. "Metis Meetings," January 5, 1872, Richard C. Hardisty Fonds M477, Glenbow Archives, https://www.glenbow.org/collections/search/findingAids/archhtm/hardisty.cfm#series9.
[64] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 91.
[65] Sissons, *John Kerr*, 90; Gerhard John Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland*, 41.

to do this, travelling "to the other side of the hill and to approach the herd from the opposite direction. We did. Before the buffalo could get up, we were among them with our horses."[66] The chief had to time the charge into the herd so that each family was set up to be successful. Thus, the hunt chiefs were providers for the community economically and subsistence wise.[67] As such, buffalo hunt leadership was provided authority based on their reputation of successfully leading their brigades into hunts in which all members were able to fulfill their needs in this resource.

The hunt leadership was also responsible for managing internal conflict between the groups of each brigade, buffalo hunt chiefs needed to be able to manage these conflicts within the authority given. The first line of defence against internal conflict was a collectively developed set of laws for each hunt, with reliance on the council to maintain order within the camp and enforce the rules. These laws also safeguarded the hunt's economic success for the entire group. For instance, John Kerr tells of when conflict occurred due to brigade members trying to hunt outside of the laws established by the council. Gabriel was chief for a brigade that included Mistahi-maskwa's (Chief Big Bear) people, as well as other Métis from Fort Qu'Appelle, St. Laurent, Wood Mountain, and Cree from the Carlton and Pitt area.[68] The hunt had been well underway when a scout returned, convinced that someone had purposely drawn the buffalo away.[69] In these situations, the leaders of the hunt, especially Gabriel as chief, had to look at the available evidence and weigh the long-term consequences for the Métis and the rights of the brigade as a whole. The law of the plains was that anyone who made the decision to join a hunt brigade lost the right to hunt on their own. The council subsequently met to investigate the allegations and, through some interrogation, confirmed that Mistahi-maskwa was the main suspect, as several of his people were missing from the meeting.[70] The council sent out scouts who located the herd on the other side of the river, near what was determined to be Mistahi-maskwa's camp. The scouts also caught one of Mistahi-maskwa's men who had helped drive the buffalo away from the herd the brigade had located the day before.[71] The council learned that Mistahi-maskwa had sent five

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[66] Welsh and Weekes, *The Last Buffalo Hunter*, 90.
[67] Anderson, Innes, and Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities: Carrying the Bones of the Ancestors," 266–84.
[68] Sissons, *John Kerr*, 153.
[69] Sissons, 153.
[70] Sissons, 154–55.
[71] Sissons, 156.

of his young men to move the herd closer to his community. This left Gabriel and the council with the problem of what to do with Mistahi-maskwa.[72] Mistahi-maskwa, having joined the hunt, had agreed to the laws established at the first meeting. However, it was important that the council ensured that its decision did not ignite future conflicts or cause the buffalo to scatter, thereby preventing any hunting for the brigade.[73]

The council deliberated for some time on what the best course of action was, adjourning until the next morning to ensure they had ample time to ponder the importance of the events and possible outcomes.[74] In the end, the council decided to return most of the buffalo to the original herd.[75] In addition, the council fined Mistahi-maskwa a horse, harness, and cart, which was given to one of the Wood Mountain hunters.[76] This fine was likely considered substantial, but not overly harsh. It demonstrates the way council had the authority to alter the application of the rules of the hunt as this penalty did not align with the consequences normally given for a first offense. According to the laws of most hunts, a first offence resulted in the offender's bridle and saddle being cut up. A horse harness and cart were necessities for moving a family across the plains with the meat from the hunt, and it required substantial effort to manage without it or produce a replacement. In comparison, this punishment had a more severe financial consequence, but also did not go to the extremes of flogging, which was the usual consequence for someone's third offence.[77] Likely the council did not use corporal punishment because that was not seen within their realm of authority. Mistahi-maskwa was not Métis. Moreover, because Mistahi-maskwa's camp was nearby, the loss of these items, while considerable, did not make it unreasonably difficult for him to return to his community. With this decision, the hunt leadership managed to accomplish two things. First, they returned the buffalo to the whole brigade, ensuring a successful hunt, and second, they limited Mistahi-maskwa's opportunity to further hunt with the group. However, the punishment also did not shame Mistahi-maskwa or his people (the usual

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[72] Sissons, 159.
[73] Sissons, 159–60.
[74] Sissons, 159.
[75] Sissons, 159–60.
[76] John Kerr did not record why the council chose to give these fines to this hunter. I deduce that either this family needed the goods more than the others, or perhaps they had been affected the most by Big Bear's actions. Sissons, 160.
[77] Darren Préfontaine and Patrick Young, "Bison Hunting," Virtual Museum, 2003, http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/00716.

punishment for theft was to lead the offender through the camp while crying "thief") and therefore maintained the alliance between the Cree and the Métis. This was not an unusual situation; several other similar examples exist within the records of the buffalo hunt.[78]

Other scholars have explored comparable circumstances to understand Métis governance structures. Adam Gaudry argues that the buffalo hunt chief and council had the right to override the family's state of kaa-tipeyimishoyaahk when a situation warranted.[79] Gaudry notes that penalties such as public shaming were "perhaps the most effective, because Métis usually 'found losing face more difficult to endure than losing possessions.'"[80] Whereas in the situation I describe, the complexities of Mistahi-maskwa not being Métis and a leader of his own people possibly made shaming less effective due to cultural differences. Gaudry also insists that attempts to hunt on their own once committing to the brigade was considered a more serious infraction. Gaudry refers to Alexander Ross's example of a family who attempted to leave the main party and were returned to the caravan by a captain. Here Hallett, the captain of the hunt had the authority to compel the Parisien family to return as it protected the economic success of the brigade as a whole, but also the safety of the brigade as at that time the caravan was concerned about a Dakota attack and each family was needed to defend the caravan.[81] Thus, leadership in the buffalo hunt required not only the skills to manage resources, but also the diplomacy to assess the goals of the community and prevent unfavourable consequences.[82] It was important that the elected leaders fulfilled their responsibility by keeping the wellbeing of the brigade in mind.

In addition to managing internal conflict, the buffalo hunt carried the risk of conflict with external groups. Because of this, the hunt leadership had to be able to protect the brigade, and, if needed, the hunt chief functioned as the war chief. While the buffalo hunt itself was not an act of war, military skills were necessary, because the movement through overlapping territories meant that conflict could easily arise.[83] Gabriel learned this at a young age when the Métis fought in the Battle of Grand Couteau, discussed previously. This event allowed him to experience a battle and

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[78] Sissons, *John Kerr;* Dumont, *Memoires.*
[79] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 107.
[80] Gaudry, 107.
[81] Gaudry, 108.
[82] Earle, *How Chiefs Come to Power*, 7.
[83] Ross, *The Red River Settlement*, 248.

see Métis defence strategy in person and learn the importance of knowing how to protect the brigade.[84] Fortunately, the danger of the hunt was not always at the scale of the Battle of Grand Couteau, and the leaders most often traveled ahead of the brigade to be the first line of defence. Once, when out scouting for the hunt, Gabriel found himself climbing up a butte, vigilant to someone attacking him when he spotted an A'aninin[85] man sleeping at the top. He noticed the rifle beside the man and recognized the danger he was in, "he said to himself: if I scare him as I awaken him, he will jump on his rifle and kill me."[86] Moving silently, Gabriel snuck up to the man, removed his rifle and woke him with a stroke of the whip.[87] Gabriel recounts that he could have killed the man but instead attempted to make peace with him, sharing tea, and "found his pipe, lit it and offered it to him. The [A'aninin] regained his confidence and smoked with delight."[88] The men sat together for a while before Gabriel returned the rifle to the man and sent him off with a gift of tobacco.[89] Gabriel was being cautious when out scouting, aware of the potential danger around each bend or up each hill. However, while he was prepared for conflict, he also did not seek it out. By taking the time to ensure that the other man understood that Gabriel could have hurt him but chose not to, Gabriel accomplished two things that benefited the hunting brigade. First, by aggressively waking the man, he set a tone that ensured that he was in control of the situation, and, as such, he limited the chance that the man could hurt him, removing a leader from the hunt, and causing a larger conflict. Second, instead of simply letting the man go, by taking the time to have tea with him and share the pipe, Gabriel ensured that there was no misunderstanding between the two that could cause further conflict. Gaudry discusses the importance of smoking the pipe as a "collectively recognized ritual where both parties called upon spiritual powers to create, renew, or protect the relationship between their peoples. In this

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[84] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 25; William Morton, "The Battle of Grand Coteau: July 13 and 14, 1851." In *Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1970), 45–59.
[85] Gabriel Dumont refers to this man as a Gros Ventre man in his memoirs; however, A'aninin is the community's preferred term.
[86] Dumont, *mémoires*, 37–38; Elie Dumont, Interview, July 17, 1973, Metis Museum / Gabriel Dumont Institute, http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/01123.
[87] Dumont, *mémoires*, 38.
[88] Dumont, *mémoires*, 38.
[89] Dumont, 38; *St. Ann's Centennial: 100 Years of Faith, Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation, Belcourt, North Dakota, 1885-1985*: North Dakota County and Town Histories, 1985, 234, http://digitalhorizonsonline.org/cdm/ref/collection/ndsl-books/id/28098.

way, the pipe solemnized a diplomatic treaty for it recognized a shared diplomatic narrative process…"[90] The relationship formed by the sharing of the pipe is demonstrated when Gabriel later ran into the A'aninin man, who was now grand chief of his community, and they met each other with "fraternal gestures of greeting."[91]

Gabriel Dumont's memoires provide another example of the need for Métis leaders to balance the need to protect themselves and the brigade with the need to not harm diplomatic relations.[92] Gabriel recalls when he was young and came across a Káínaa[93] man on a horse. Gaudry also evaluates this scenario, noting that the Káínaa were enemies with the Cree, an ally of the Métis, and as not relatives the men were "obligated to fight, flee, or make peace."[94] They charged each other, and Gabriel did not want to hurt the other man, so he aimed to knock him to the ground. The horses collided and the Káínaa man's horse bolted. Gabriel

> sat his horse on his hindquarters, and made an abrupt about-face, in another bound, caught up to his adversary from behind, grabbed him firmly by the arm so that the other could not think of defending himself. Gabriel led his prisoner by the arm all the way to the camp. There he was given a pipe which he smoked…then he was told he could leave, and he fled on his horse as fast as he could.[95]

Gabriel later met this same man when he attempted to broker peace between their two groups.[96] Gabriel's caution in the situation was important, as there was significant conflict in the area at the time. The Káínaa man's community was part of the Niitsitapi Confederacy (Blackfoot Confederacy), who had been enemies of the Iron Alliance[97] since the late

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[90] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 146.
[91] Dumont, *mémoires*, 40.
[92] Earle, *How Chiefs Come to Power*, 7.
[93] Gabriel Dumont states that this man is from the Blood Tribe, also known as the Káínaa Nation. Dumont, *mémoires*, 39.
[94] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 147.
[95] Dumont, *mémoires*, 39.
[96] It should be noted that in this translation of Dumont's memoires, it is stated he sees the Gros Ventre (A'aninin) man, but because of the structure, it is believed that this refers to the Káínaa man. Woodcock refers to this story as being the Káínaa man, and Gaudry using Woodcock as source interprets it as Káínaa. Dumont, 39; Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont*, 66; Gaudry, "kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk," 147-148.
[97] The Iron Alliance or Nehiyaw-Pwat was a political and military alliance. Innes, *Elder Brother*, Chap. 2; Chartrand, "Indigenous Peoples," 167.

eighteenth century, as their territories overlapped. The Métis, who were part of the Iron Alliance, and Gabriel's actions had effects that extended beyond him, his family, and his community, to the Alliance. Thus, even as he defended himself, Gabriel was not an inherently violent man, and he prevented any retaliation against him or his community. Further, the sharing of the pipe ended the conflict and formed a relationship of fellowship "transforming their status as enemies"[98] allowing future diplomatic opportunities for the Métis. Métis politics existed not in isolation but in conjunction with the needs of their allies, and leaders had to keep those factors in mind as they managed conflicts.[99] These examples demonstrate how Gabriel embodied abilities and characteristics that his community recognized as beneficial as buffalo hunt chief: knowledge of the buffalo and skill in the hunt, the ability to protect himself and the brigade, as well as his excellent diplomatic leadership proficiencies, fulfilling his responsibility to the community.

St. Laurent de Grandin

[Dumont's] ability to see through a situation and understand what needed to be done, right, like how he can analyze something, and figure out how to deal with it and know when and where to solve those problems, logistically.

Curtis DuMont- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[100]

Adaptability was a key aspect of historical Métis identity, and Curtis DuMont's quote above shows how he understand Gabriel Dumont's ability to manage the need for change as an important part of his success as a leader. Gabriel Dumont's life allows us to explore how buffalo hunt chiefs shifted their leadership to accommodate the establishment of permanent settlements like St. Laurent de Grandin as an example of this need to evaluate a situation and manage the issue at hand to guide the community to success. As the buffalo numbers began to dwindle, Gabriel's hunting brigade recognized the benefits of moving from their hivernant to a permanent community. Records reveal that the community, which consisted of about fifty families, met with invited guests from the HBC, including Chairman Lawrence Clarke, to come to a decision as a

[98] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves,'" 147.
[99] Gaudry, 134.
[100] Curtis DuMont, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 10, 2020.

group on whether they should create a settlement. During the meeting, it was acknowledged that settlers were coming, and Clarke referred to them as "hordes of energetic industrious men from other Countries, who will tread out with the plough and mattoe, that trivial resource on which they built their hopes."[101] While Clarke had his own reasons for encouraging the Métis to settle, in line with Canadian policies of treaties and reserves, the Métis were aware of the incoming settlers and the need to organize to claim some land before their arrival, having knowledge of the events in Red River the year before. Thus, in 1871, the Métis founded St. Laurent de Grandin on the South Saskatchewan River, which included a mission led by Father André. Joe Sawchuck uses St. Laurent de Grandin to argue that settlement's political organization and leadership was disconnected from the buffalo hunt government structures as it included a council elected for one year in comparison to the rotating structure of the buffalo hunt.[102] However, I align with scholars such as Janique Dubois, Kelly Saunders, and Adam Gaudry who see more connections between the buffalo hunt and the leadership in St. Laurent de Grandin. Dubois and Saunders in reference to Sawchuk's analysis state that when "one considers the willingness of the Metis to strategically adapt their political tactics depending on the specific goal at hand"[103] the connection between the buffalo hunt and St. Laurent governance is clear. Further they argue that it was not specific structures that moved into the settlement governance but the underlying objectives that continued to observe "Métis collective goals and reflect a shared commitment to such principles as democracy and the rule of law."[104] Gaudry argues the principles of kaa-tipeymishoyaahk and wahkootowin were deeply influential in Métis government structures on the prairie or in Red River.[105] Further, I add to this conversation that the chief and council structure of the buffalo hunt and its adoption into St. Laurent has always been influenced in some respects by the European governance structure. Métis governance, while founded in democratic and wahkootowin principles, was linked to Métis masculinities that, as discussed through this dissertation, was influenced through contact with colonial structures, through the freemen who were part of proto-

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[101] "Metis Meetings," January 5, 1872, Richard C. Hardisty Fonds, Glenbow Archives, https://www.glenbow.org/collections/search/findingAids/archhtm/hardisty.cfm#series9.
[102] Joe Sawchuk, *The Dynamics of Native Politics: The Alberta Metis Experience*, Barron Native Studies Collection (Saskatoon: Purich Publishing, 1998), 51–52.
[103] Saunders and Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, 36.
[104] Saunders and Dubois, 36.
[105] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 118.

generation to the interaction of the fur trade economy.[106] The council in St. Laurent was also not unusual, with similar councils established in different settlements including St. Albert and Qu'Appelle district.[107] Thus, this settlement illustrates how leadership adapted from the mobile buffalo hunt to settlement, and how the leadership positions and structure of governance maintained the foundations of the buffalo hunt.

The steps to create the permanent settlement demonstrate the continuation and adaptability of Métis governance. Several members of the Dumont family, including Gabriel, his father (Ekapow), and cousin (Petit Jean) were involved in deciding on the settlement's creation and location, as discussed in the previous chapter. The hivernant community appointed a group of ten men to scout out an ideal area. Ekapow suggested a piece of land near Fort Carlton that he thought worked:

> [Ekapow] had been all his life a prairie hunter. He could remember when vast herds of buffalo covered the prairies from the foot of the Rocky Mountains to Fort Garry. Now they were only to be found in the Saskatchewan, and as the country got peopled the buffalo would disappear. He was an old man and could tell the young people that the decision they had come to was good, they must do like other white men, cultivate the ground or they must live and die like Indians…. If they were wise they would follow his advice. He knew a tract of country between Carlton and Prince Albert which he thought would answer their purpose, it was good country, good soil, plenty of wood for building and fuel and wild hay in abundance. The grasses were good for horses and the spot not too far from the Buffalo Country.[108]

Ekapow's suggestion was accepted as he was respected for his knowledge and history as a leader, and his stature as an elder, as it was the community's elders that were looked to for this decision rather than an elected council.[109] While he was not acting in an elected position in this time, his

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[106] Brendan Hokowhitu, "Producing Elite Indigenous Masculinities," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 23–48, https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2012.10648840.
[107] Diane Payment, *The Free People = Li Gens Libres: A History of the Métis Community of Batoche, Saskatchewan*, Rev. and expanded., Aboriginal Education Collection (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2009), 125.
[108] "Metis Meetings," 5–6.
[109] Payment, *The Free People - Li Gens Libres*, 34.

word had weight and those involved agreed to look at the area he suggested. By the following spring, the community had agreed on the location and began to develop their plots of land.[110]

As in the buffalo hunt, the decision to settle and build as a community called for the election of a council to deal with any issues that could develop in the community. On December 10, 1872 a public assembly was held to draw up the laws for St. Laurent as "in the absence of any form of government among them to administer justice and to judge the differences that may arise among them, they have thought it necessary to choose from among their number a Chief and Councillors invested with power to judge differences and to decide ambiguous questions and matters offending the public interest."[111] Here, community members recognized that there was a lack of effective governance in the region they could take concerns to, and they adapted the buffalo hunt chief and council structure to the settlement's needs, drafting a set of rules as they would at the start of a buffalo hunt, to guide the community. These laws were developed by the community as a whole and were flexible aiming to reduce conflict between families and individuals. They were cautious however, after the development of the Province of Manitoba, to ensure they did not appear to be working against the Government of Canada and its tenure in the northwest,

> it is well understood that in making their laws and regulations the inhabitants of St. Laurent in no way pretend to constitute for themselves an independent state, but the actual situation of the country in which they live, obliges them to take some measures to maintain peace and union amongst them, knowing that so large a society as theirs can exist only under some sort of organization to preserve mutually their rights, but in forming these laws, they acknowledge themselves as loyal and faithful subjects of Canada, and are ready to abandon their own organization and to submit to the laws of the Dominion, as soon as Canada shall have established amongst them regular

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[110] "Metis Meetings"; Father Alexandre André, "Petite Chronique de St. Laurent," 1894 1871, 2, Oblates Archives, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

[111] It should be noted the typed version of these minutes are dated 1873 but Payment states it was in 1872 which aligns more with other records. "12631.St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan, Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St.," accessed September 24, 2015, http://www.metismuseum.ca/media/document.php/12631.St.%20Laurent%20on%20the%20Saskatchewan,%20Copy%20of%20the%20Laws%20and%20Regulations%20Established%20for%20the%20Colony%20of%20St.; Diane P. Payment, *The Free People*, 124.

magistrates with a force sufficient to uphold in their country the authority of the law.[112]

With that understanding of the rights they felt they held to arrange this council and how it stood within the realm of other political authorities, president and council were elected for a term of one year. Gabriel was elected as president and the community developed a set of laws that reflected the issues they expected during this stage of settlement.[113] The decision to create a settlement, where it was placed, and the establishment of leadership and laws, was done through the Métis democratic process adapting the practices from the buffalo hunt council and involved the entire community.

Gabriel's election as president of St. Laurent de Grandin was not surprising, and it followed Métis leadership processes supported by Métis governance. Alexander Ross states that the buffalo chief "was styled the great war chief or head of the camp; and on all public occasions, he occupied the place of president,"[114] demonstrating that the practice of hunt chief acting as president had been long established within Métis governance structures. It makes sense that the community selected as president someone whom they had elected as a leader before. However, his election was not guaranteed, and the first meeting gave the community the opportunity to decide who was the best leader at the time. Diane Payment asserts that the president and eight councillors were to "act as an administrative, military, and judicial body during the annual hunts as well as during periods of residence in the colony."[115] Gabriel's election shows that his community felt he held the abilities and experience needed to lead the council for both the hunt and the periods in settlement. Eight councillors were elected, including Jean Dumont (likely Petit Jean), Alexander Hamelin, Baptiste Gurriepy, Pierre Gurriepy, Abraham Montour, Moyse Mealet (Moïse Oulette), and Baptiste Hamelin.[116] The election of Gabriel and well-known hunt leaders

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[112] "12631.St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan, Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St."
[113] "Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan," 1873, St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan, Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St., Metis Museum / Gabriel Dumont Institute, http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/12631.
[114] Ross, *The Red River Settlement*, 248.
[115] Payment, *The Free People*, 124.
[116] "Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan."

shows also how this community was still living in a period where the hunt dominated a large part of many families' lives in the year. Maintaining leadership throughout made sense and allowed for consistency. Gabriel held this position for several years, being re-elected several times through the period that the St. Laurent de Grandin council existed.

The St. Laurent de Grandin council developed a series of laws continuing the processes developed in the buffalo hunt. Between 1873 and 1875 community assemblies developed twenty-eight laws. The laws granted authority to the leadership, stating that the president and councillors were "empowered to judge all cases that shall be brought before them. The chief, by advice of his Council can convoke the general assemblies…"[117] The community was then asked to take an oath to support the council and uphold the laws, and the council offered reciprocal support.[118] Furthermore, the laws emphasized the importance and responsibility of assuming the role of councillor. The group established fines between three to five louis[119] for missing meetings, which created an economic consequence for failing to serve the community.[120]

The role of the council reflected how Métis leadership was grounded in kinship responsibility. For instance, the council sent their best hunters out to procure food for the community. When the hunts returned to the settlement, Gabriel, as chief and president, ensured that those who were unable to participate also received sufficient meat to sustain them through the season.[121] John Kerr tells that Gabriel ensured meat found its way back to St. Laurent, where he entrusted Father André to distribute the meat "along with some articles for the 'old folks at home,' most of what remained of our kill."[122] This practice was not unique to St. Laurent, Ska-kas-ta-ow, who was living closer to Pembina, called for his hunt to feed everyone who was short

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[117] "12631.St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan, Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent," http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/12631
[118] "12631.St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan, Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent"
[119] The French Louis d'or was one of several coins in circulation whose values varied widely over time with changes in their gold or silver content, inflation, etc. The Louis d'or ranged from 10 livres in 1640 to 54 livres in 1720 James Powell, *A History of the Canadian Dollar* (Ottawa: Bank of Canada, 2005), 3, http://www.bankofcanada.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2010/07/dollar_book.pdf.
[120] "12631.St. Laurent on the Saskatchewan, Copy of the Laws and Regulations Established for the Colony of St. Laurent"
[121] Sissons, *John Kerr*, 130; Thompson, *Red Sun*, 107.
[122] Sissons, 130.

of food in 1879, as those without homes were starting to congregate around Métis settlements, as those years were filled with starvation.[123] This mutual responsibility to one another followed Métis kinship beliefs aligning with wahkootowin. Being a leader fulfilled the needs of the community and taking on a leadership role fulfilled a kinship responsibility to the community. Thus, as in the buffalo hunt, strong leadership collaborated with the community and operated within the laws they established, remaining rooted within the Métis way of life.

Métis leadership acknowledged that there were overlapping governance systems in the region. The council of St. Laurent, with Gabriel Dumont as president existed until 1876, when a North West Mounted Police post was developed at Duck Lake. As mentioned with the buffalo hunt, Métis leadership had to manage their exertion of governance with other authorities in the region. Diane Payment writes that during the 1870s the Métis, who had no voice in Northwest Council, were most of the population in South Saskatchewan River district. The council only had consultative powers, and as such the council at St. Laurent de Grandin managed, as in their original constitution, to only exert their powers due to lack of other authority from the Dominion of Canada in the region.[124] A territorial government is defined as a government in transition, it did not hold the same authority as a province (such as Manitoba) under the British North America Act (1867).[125] The Northwest Territory Act (1875) gave the Commissioner "ultimate de jure" power.[126] The act gave the Lieutenant-Governor and the council of five the decision making authority for regional matters such as "roads, inheritance, public health, and alcohol control," but any ordinances could be altered or vacated by the federal government.[127] This meant that any issue of real concern was in the end managed by the federal government.[128]

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[123] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 107–8.
[124] Payment, *The Free People*, 126–27.
[125] M. O. Dickerson and Arctic Institute of North America, *Whose North?: Political Change, Political Development, and Self-Government in the Northwest Territories* (UBC Press, 1992), 3.
[126] Dickerson and America, 5.
[127] The Act goes through additional changes over time, and regions of the North West Territories became provinces in 1905 (Saskatchewan and Alberta) seeing even more change to not just the governance but the regional borders. Gerald Heinrichs, "North-West Territories Act," University of Regina and Canadian Plains Research Center, 2007, https://ourspace.uregina.ca/esask/tmc_cms/modules/customcode/includes/print_entry.cfm-entryid=734F732F-1560-95DA-4330545089136CC8.jsp.
[128] Heinrichs.

Payment refers to a situation that occurred in 1875 as the downfall of the St. Laurent de Grandin government. Arguing the conflict was due to the colonial government's distrust of the council, who feared the Métis would assert their rights as they had done in Manitoba. The circumstance is around the Ballendine family's decision to leave in advance of the main caravan for the annual hunt. The St. Laurent de Grandin council gave approval for Gabriel Dumont and his captains to impose fines and sanctions to the offenders. Ballendine then complained to the HBC officer and local magistrate Lawrence Clarke. Payment refers to Father André's witness to this incident

> As soon as they arrived at Fort Carlton to sell or barter their provisions, they complained of having been mistreated, robbed and almost killed. Moreover, they knew whom to complain to, for they chose people how took a jaundiced view of the establishment of laws and colonies in which they had not had the honour to take part.[129]

Payment argues that the colonial authorities "resented Métis law and, with the support of Father André, pressured the Métis to abandon the enforcement of their customary laws and reimburse the offenders. Gabriel and the council did so peacefully, but the authority and prestige of the council was seriously undermined. The HBC and the Territorial government had taken advantage of divisions within the Métis community to intervene and check its power."[130]

However, the accounts of Father André give more detail than what Payment refers to. Father Andre's account states that the men exaggerated their punishments, and that in fact Gabriel and the council ordered fines to two men (Ballendine and Primeau) with the promise they reported to Fort Carlton immediately, and no corporal punishment was given. Further, the council had sent a letter to the party asking for their cooperation:

> We are not satisfied that you go so before us and you are hunting in our country. Therefore all the people of metif of Carlton pray you come to all at once to our camp if that you agree not to yourself all the cavaliery will go and bring you to our camp and if you cause damage to ourselves you will pay that cover especially the metifs of

[129] As translated and quoted in: Payment, *The Free People*, 125.
[130] Payment, *The Free People*, 126.

> your camp. We write to you as friends to advise you, if you wil not believe us, certainly you will pay all the cavalier who will go and bring you. Love well Your Servants all the people Metif of Carlton in the plains. Gabriel Dumont.[131]

By no means was the council attempting to exert their power over non-Métis people, and Father André notes that it was after a "dozen days of marching… We were beginning to meet a few buffaloes, the sight of which gave everyone good courage and good hope, when we learned that several métis of the parish of St. Laurent, without respect for the regulations and without fear of causing harm to their brothers, had took the lead."[132] Rather, they were reminding the principles of wahkootowin and the agreement the men had taken in being part of the hunt.

Lawrence Clarke, however, was quite concerned about the events and the St. Laurent de Grandin council. Clarke sent a letter to Governor-Lieutenant Alexander Morris

> A population of one hundred and fifty families of French extraction have taken up a portion of the Lands on each side of the South Saskatchewan River distant eighteen miles from Carlton and have formed a permanent settlement there in which Settlement they have given the name of St. Laurent…. have assumed to themselves the right to enact Laws, rules and regulations for the Government of the colony and adjourning country of a most tyrannical nature, which the minority of the settlers are enforce bound to obey or be treated with criminal severity.
>
> From this body a Court has been constituted numbering fourteen persons presided over by a man named Gabriel Dumond who is designated as 'President' and before when all delinquents are made to appear or suffer violence in person or property… this court pretends further to have the power to enforce their Laws upon all Indians, settlers, and hunters who frequent the Prairie country in the lower section of the

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[131] The Letter from Gabriel Dumont is included in the Letter sent from Clarke to the Dominion Government. Lawrence Clarke, "Letter from Carlton House," July 10, 1875, Alexander Morris Fonds, Archives of Manitoba.

[132] Translation mine. Original "une douzaine de jours de marche ... on commencait à recontrer queleques buffalos dont la veu donnait à tous bon courage et bonne espérance, lorsqu'on apprend que plusiers metis de la paroiss se de St. Laurent, sans respect pour les règlements et sans crainte de causer dommage à leurs frères, avaient pris les devantes." Father Alexandre André, "Petite Chronique de St. Laurent," 1871-1894, Oblates Archives, Provincial Archives of Alberta, 8.

> Saskatchewan; and have levied by violence and robbery large sums of money [illegible] persons, who resort to the Buffalo Country for a livelihood."[133]

The result of this letter was that Gabriel met with Northwest Police officer Sam Steele, and after some discussion between Steele, Gabriel and Major General Selby-Smith all concerns were cleared as it was understood that Gabriel and the council were only enforcing laws required for a successful buffalo hunt.[134] So while there were concerns from the colonial agents, such as Lawrence Clarke, the reality is in this period most agents understood that the council of St. Laurent was working within the authority they had over their population (in settlement and with the hunt), and was not attempting to thwart Dominion authority in the region. This required Gabriel to be able to speak on behalf of the council and maintain good relations with the colonial administrators in the region. Further, Gabriel needed to be a leader in which the colonial authorities recognized his position, something a Métis woman likely did not gain the same respect regarding. However, with the transfer of the North West Territories government to Battleford from Winnipeg, the St. Laurent de Grandin council stopped meeting, and did not reconvene until the community felt an assembly was needed to address new concerns.[135]

As further issues regarding Métis rights to land and governance arose, assemblies were held. Around 1880–81, the Métis of Batoche and St. Laurent were upset by the federal government's decision to begin charging them for the wood they cut for heating and making boards on what they considered Métis land. They saw these restrictions as a disregard for Métis governance of the area. This was something to which they believed they had free access, and that they had previously regulated within their own communities.[136] Out of concern, Gabriel, in his mid-forties, travelled with Father Végréville to speak against the regulations and to organize assemblies. Gabriel, stated, "I could not understand…that they would do this to us here, in what was still a wild country. I remember in Manitoba, four or five years after it had been made into a Province, we cut wood freely on the unoccupied land."[137] St. Laurent de Grandin was part of the

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[133] Clarke, "Letter from Carlton House."
[134] Samuel B. Steele (Samuel Benfield), *Forty Years in Canada: Reminiscences of the Great North-West with Some Account of His Service in South Africa* (Toronto: McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, 1915), 92; Sissons, *John Kerr*, 161.
[135] Payment, *The Free People*, 126.
[136] Dumont, *mémoires*, 45.
[137] Dumont, 45.

North-West Territories, and not a province of the Confederation (as Manitoba became in 1870), and the Métis referred to this as precedence for the use of this resource. Subsequently, Gabriel approached Laferté (Louis Schmidt) who had confiscated the wood and dispensed fines on the Dominion government's behalf. Laferté told Gabriel that he believed the Métis would not be successful in getting the law changed.[138]

The Métis, unhappy with Laferté's response, gathered at Batoche and elected a new council to manage the problem.[139] The election of a new council followed Métis democratic practices. Because this issue affected the Métis of both St. Laurent and Batoche, the council allowed both groups to elect representation. Moreover, this new council acknowledged that leadership for this issue may need to be different. The assembly wanted to elect Gabriel as the President, however, Gabriel withdrew, stating that he wanted to be able to speak his mind, "The governor is testing us and if we let him, he will go even further."[140] Gabriel acknowledged that his approach may not be the best for this situation, and the community was best served if he was not their representative. Here he appears to recognize his weaknesses as a leader for this situation, stepping back to instead use his voice as one of the community. This decision was likely not seen as unusual, leaders were chosen based on their skills and aptitudes for the situation in which the community wished to elect leadership. As Métis elected leadership was not long term, elected men—like Gabriel— spent most of their lives acting as more informal leaders. So, his refusal to be elected and to instead represent his family, was a position he held likely more often than as an elected leader. As such, Emmanuel Champagne was named President.[141] The community created a petition that Gabriel delivered to Lawrence Clarke, the HBC chief factor and member of the NWT Council. Clarke represented both the HBC and the NWT Council in dual roles.[142] He had a long relationship with many of the community members, and, as previously mentioned, he attended the first meeting regarding the establishment of St. Laurent de Grandin. The NWT Council now was being run out of Battleford, much closer to the settlements than the previous headquarters in Winnipeg and had begun to exert a lot more power over the region leading to the

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[138] Louis Schmidt had acted as Louis Riel's secretary in 1870. Dumont, 45–46.
[139] Dumont, 47.
[140] Dumont, 47.
[141] Dumont, 47.
[142] John Tattrie, "Northwest Territories and Confederation," The Canadian Encyclopedia, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/northwest-territories-and-confederation.

council of St. Laurent no longer consistently meeting to avoid conflict with the Dominion authority represented in the North-West Council. Perhaps Gabriel, having stepped down as president, felt that he could use his relationship and experience with the NWT Council to sway their opinion, and if his visit was unsuccessful, the petition could stand on its own. This approach worked. While Clarke was hesitant at first to even act on behalf of the Métis, he decided to take the petition to the government; five days later, the law was changed, and the Métis had the right to freely cut wood for their own use.[143] This example demonstrates several aspects of Métis leadership. The election of the new council was successful, both communities were able to put forth their stance, and while Gabriel was still involved, this example illustrates how Métis leadership and its democratic processes adapted to best meet the situation they faced, and that well respected leaders like Gabriel were not always the best choice. These events also show how the Métis communities managed issues where regulations from the colonial governments did not align with their understanding of access and rights to resources of the land. The Métis used democratic processes and attempted to work within the structure of the Dominion government via petitions, and this approach continued regarding other concerns leading up to 1885.

1885

I think of him as the rebel fighter. I think him as a smart military man

Jeannine Dumont Christopherson- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner [144]

For Jeannine Dumont Christopherson, Gabriel's role as a military leader in the 1885 North West Resistance is an important aspect of her understanding of the man. For this chapter, this period provides the opportunity to explore Métis leadership and Gabriel's role in the events, beyond that of his military role. The threat of incoming settlers along with a lack of response by the Dominion to Métis petitions brought the communities of Batoche and St. Laurent de Grandin together again. There were rumours that settlers were dispossessing Métis people in the Edmonton region. The Métis in Edmonton, frustrated by the federal government's refusal to issue them title to their lands, took the law into their own hands to "uphold justice," rigging horses with cables tied to the settlers' houses to collapse them.[145] The Edmonton Métis were merely

[143] Dumont, *mémoires*, 48–49.
[144] Jeannine Dumont Christopherson, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 11, 2019.
[145] Dumont, *mémoires*, 49.

protecting the land they had lived on long before the settlers came west. The Métis across the northwest believed that they should have title to the land, and they attempted to achieve this for several years.[146] They witnessed how Louis Riel and the provisional government in Red River were successful in gaining title to land, but by 1881, Métis across the plains were also aware that no one else was receiving title, and obtaining scrips was problematic.[147]

In comparing the events that lead to the establishment of the Manitoba Act and leading to the 1885 North West Resistance, many similarities are seen, demonstrating the consistency and adaptability that is at the root of Métis governance and leadership. Adam Gaudry gives a detailed description of the creation of assemblies in Red River that led to the negotiation of the Manitoba Act in 1870. Gaudry notes these assemblies followed the buffalo hunt model and led to the Métis of Red River region establishing a "series of increasingly influential governments aimed at asserting an Indigenous Métis political presence in their homeland while rejecting the assumption of Canadian authority over the North-West, and the Métis people more specifically."[148] At the first Métis assembly in February of 1869, "Some 'leading men' among the Métis for an establishment of 'an independent government for themselves'" saw a call to replace the Council of Assiniboia with their own government to prevent Canada's ability to purchase the North-West.[149] The result was less successful than hoped, but additional assemblies were called in July,

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[146] Petitions were sent from Métis across the plains seeking title to their land after the Manitoba Act came into effect. Canada Department of the Secretary of State, *Epitome of Parliamentary Documents in Connection with the North-West Rebellion, 1885* (Maclean, Roger & Company, 1886), https://books.google.ca/books?id=YMNYAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

[147] Scrip was a special certificate issued by the Department of the Interior that entitled the bearer to homestead lands. However, for many people who were to receive scrip, their certificates were lost by the Department of the Interior or the law firms who managed them. Many cases are recorded where people arrived to receive their scrip to find someone had already signed for it and taken it. Additionally, many applications were refused because the Department already had applications for that name submitted by someone else who claimed proof of power of attorney. These are just some examples of the difficulties Métis people had in obtaining scrip. "Métis Scrip - The Foundation for a New Beginning - Métis Scrip Records - Library and Archives Canada," Library and Archives Canada, accessed September 17, 2020, https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/metis-scrip/005005-2000-e.html.

[148] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 216.

[149] Gaudry, 216.

seeing Jean-Baptiste Tourond, a buffalo hunt chief, elected as president, and Gaudry places this council as the first "Collective Métis political response to Canadian incursions into Red River, and influenced all ensuing Métis actions."[150] The meetings led to the establishment of Le Comité National de Métis in October. Gaudry positions Louis Riel's formal Canadian education as what made him the best leader for the issues that the Red River region Métis faced, as he was able to use the discourse regarding civilization and nationhood to defend Métis governance and Indigenous rights in the North-West.[151]

Louis Riel was born in 1844 to Jean-Louis Riel and Julie Lagimonière and he began his education at St. Boniface before travelling to Canada for schooling at the Petit Séminaire de Montréal.[152] As with Gabriel, Louis Riel's family provided examples of leadership, his father chosen to be a leader in 1849 when the Métis organized a response to the arrests of four Métis traders who traded outside of the HBC monopoly.[153] Max Hamon's biography on Louis Riel also takes an in-depth exploration of Louis Riel's life and his move into leadership. Hamon notes the ways in which his education, but also his kinship connections to Red River positioned him as the most suitable candidate to head the Métis councils that were established.[154] The Red River Resistance took place just a few years before the establishment of St. Laurent de Grandin. As in Red River, with the increasing influence of the Dominion of Canada authority into the St. Laurent and Batoche

Figure 18 Louis Riel Library and Archives Canada/MIKAN 3531914

[150] Gaudry, 217.
[151] Gaudry, 222.
[152] Louis H. Thomas, "Biography – RIEL, LOUIS (1844-85) – Volume XI (1881-1890)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (University of Toronto/Universite Laval, 2016), http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/riel_louis_1844_85_11E.html.
[153] Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk- 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves'," 193–94.
[154] Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise*.

region by 1880/1881, the Métis in wanting to protect their Indigenous rights to the land and work within the colonial governance system, acted in ways mirroring what was done in Red River.

Many Métis communities petitioned the federal government for rights to their land as they saw settlers on the horizon and treaties being signed. In 1876 several Métis families attended the signing of Treaty 6, giving them knowledge of the agreements the government was forming with their First Nations neighbors.[155] John Kerr, who lived with Gabriel and his family for a few years, attended the negotiations of Treaty 6 and wrote about seeing Gabriel and his brother Eli at the negotiations, "Darting here and there in the crowd, I found old cronies, Gabriel Dumont, his brother Eli, others of the Métis plains hunters."[156] Diane Payment assesses that the Métis of the region did not "identify as 'Indians,' but the question of Aboriginal rights was a great concern to them."[157] However, Payment adds that the Métis were aware of the need to gain title to the land they had already occupied (riverlots) and saw the treaties as an important piece of that puzzle.[158] The Métis at St. Laurent and Batoche were not ignorant of the negotiations to access land happening in the region. They knew that numerous Métis communities had been sending petitions to the Dominion government and saw a consistent lack of reply. In total eighty-four petitions had been sent to the federal government.[159] The petitions came from communities across the prairie: Qu'Appelle, Edmonton, Blackfoot Crossing, Prince Albert, Cypress Hills, Manitoba village, and other regions.[160] As such, the communities at St. Laurent and Batoche carefully observed the situation, seeing how a lack of response from the government resulted in Métis peoples being pushed off their land. Once again, the leadership of the community changed to

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[155] Allyson Donna Stevenson, "The Metis Cultural Brokers and the Western Numbered Treaties, 1869–1877" (Master's Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2004), http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/etd-07102007-132751.
[156] Sissons, *John Kerr*, 233.
[157] Payment, *The Free People*, 128.
[158] Payment, 128.
[159] Jean Teillet, *The North-West Is Our Mother: The Story of Louis Riel's People, the Metis Nation* (Patrick Crean Editions, 2019), 318.
[160] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, *Epitome of Parliamentary Documents in Connection with the North-West Rebellion, 1885* (Maclean, Roger & Company, 1886), 291–316, https://books.google.ca/books?id=YMNYAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

reflect the needs of the Métis in St. Laurent and Batoche as they sought title to their developed land.

The St. Laurent community had sent several petitions and they were frustrated with the government's lack of response. For example, the community of St. Laurent on February 1st, 1878, wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories (see fig. 19). Here the "half-breeds of the parish of St. Laurent" put forward the intentions of the community, as decided in an assembly where Gabriel Dumont was elected as president[161] and Alexander Fisher as secretary.[162] As we have seen with previous iterations of Métis governance, the assembly, which consisted of each household of the community, democratically voted on several resolutions including a request that two members of North-West Council be chosen from the "old residents of the country, and that at least one of them be a French half-breed, and that in order to do full and perfect justice to your petitioners' race, provision may be made for the immediate appointment of a person of French origin as stipendiary magistrate."[163] The petition lists several other requests: matching funding for a school, and patents for land for the Métis families who had not received scrip. The petition ends by discussing the difficulties of a "sudden transition from a prairie life to an agricultural life, caused by the rapid disappearance of the buffalo and the hunting ordinance of the North-West Council, has reduced your petitioners to the last extremity, and compels them to apply to the Dominion Government in help in farm implements and seed grain, such as has been granted to certain foreign immigrants in the Province of Manitoba."[164] This petition reveals many aspects of the way Métis communities were attempting to interact with the Dominion

[161] The published translation uses the term chairman but likely the original in French used the term president as that was consistent with Métis practices.
[162] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, *Epitome of Parliamentary Documents in Connection with the North-West Rebellion*, 1885, 317.
[163] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, 317.
[164] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, 317.

(*Translation.*)

To His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories.

The Petition of the undersigned half-breeds of the parish of St. Laurent, in the North-West Territories—

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH:

That on the 1st February instant, in public meeting assembled, in the said parish, Mr. Gabriel Dumont being chairman, and Mr. Alexander Fisher, secretary, the undersigned, your petitioners, adopted the following resolution:

That the population of the North-West Territories is for the greater part composed of French half breeds, without a single stipendiary magistrate understanding and speaking their language, and without any person of their race to represent them in the proceedings of the North-West Council; *Resolved*, therefore, that an humble petition be forwarded to His Excellency the Governor General, praying that the two members of the Council remaining to be appointed under the authority of the Act of 1875 and its amendments, may be selected from amongst the old residents of the country, and that at least one of them be a French half breed, and that in order to do full and perfect justice to your petitioners' race, provision may be made for the immediate appointment of a person of French origin as stipendiary magistrate;

That with a view to provide for the interests of education by the establishment of schools in the chief centres of the Territories, an allowance of five dollars per head for each child be made, up to the limit of two hundred dollars; that sum added to the product of voluntary subscriptions will, in many localities, render possible the building and operating of schools which would otherwise be indefinitely retarded;

That there be granted to all half-breed heads of families and to their children who have not shared in the distribution of scrip and lands in the Province of Manitoba, like scrip and grants of land as in the said Province;

That it is of the most urgent necessity that the Government should cause to be surveyed, with the least possible delay, the lands occupied and cultivated by the half-breeds or old residents of the country, and that patents therefor be granted to them;

That the sudden transition from a prairie life to an agricultural life, caused by the rapid disappearance of the buffalo and the hunting ordinance of the North-West Council, has reduced your petitioners to the last extremity, and compels them to apply to the Dominion Government for help in farm implements and seed grain, such as has been granted to certain foreign immigrants in the Province of Manitoba. Farm implements are exceedingly scarce, and the prices are so high that it is simply impossible for your petitioners to procure them; and hence, should the Government be unable to grant this help, many of your petitioners, notwithstanding their anxiety to engage in cultivating the soil, would be forced to return to prairie life at the risk of infringing the ordinance providing for the protection of the buffalo, however just that ordinance may be, inasmuch as the time during hunting is permitted is too short and the buffalo is now too scarce to enable them to lay in a sufficient supply for themselves and their families for the remainder of the year;

That His Honor the Lieutenant Governor be respectfully requested to lay this petition before His Excellency the Governor General in Council, with such remarks as his own desire for the good and prosperity of the country may suggest.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

His
GABRIEL × DUMONT, *Chairman.*
mark.
ALEX. FISHER, *Secretary.*

ST. LAURENT, 1st February, 1878.

Figure 19 February 1st, 1878, Petition from the Parish of St. Laurent.

Government. The petitions demonstrated their understanding of the legislations in place that affected their ways of life, the government structure of the North West and Dominion Governments, and the aid provided to other groups. As such, they positioned their requests as reasonable within the current government's policies. So much so, that David Laird, upon forwarding the petition to John A. Macdonald argued in the community's favour. He emphasized to Macdonald that, "It is important that the land policy of the Government towards old settlers and others living for many years, in the Territories should be declared. It appears to me that they have a claim to some more speedy means of acquiring title for settlement purposes than the homestead provisions of the Dominion Lands Act."[165] Laird continued to refer to the similarities

[165] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, 318.

of their requests to others in the region that he had previously forwarded to the Dominion Government.[166] Laird's support was not unusual, often local agents were more aligned with Indigenous communities than the geographically removed federal government in Ottawa.

Father André, the priest at the mission of St. Laurent, Batoche, and Duck Lake also supported the efforts of the Métis and was frustrated by the lack of response by the government. Father André had been in the Northwest for some time, situated at St. Boniface, Pembina, St. Albert, and Carlton House. He instituted the mission at St. Laurent in 1871 amongst the Métis with the approval of Bishop Grandin. André also established a mission at Duck Lake, Sandy Lake, and the mission of St. George in Prince Albert. Overall, most of his career was spent establishing missions within Métis communities and he worked as a spokesperson on their behalf to the government officials.[167] Father André noted the following in his mission journal in 1884:

Figure 20 Father André Credit: Library Archives Canada/Mikan 3191900

[166] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, 318.
[167] Robertson gives credit to Father André for the establishment of St. Laurent's provisional government, but as shown in this chapter his influence was likely small as this was not a unique council within Métis governance structures. D.F. Robertson, "Biography – ANDRÉ, ALEXIS –

> The great difficulty encountered by the Métis in obtaining land surveys in the first place in accordance with the present boundaries and form of these lands, the slowness in confirming their titles and the quasi refusal to grant them. Asked for the extinction of their Indian rights, it is the cause of all this discontent today. Several applications were lodged in Ottawa. Delegates were even sent to the capital at great expense, but nothing happened. Is there any other population in the other provinces that would not have already revolted if they had undergone the same treatment? Certainly not.[168]

This silence was not only upsetting to the Métis of the area, and on June 14 1881 Father André wrote his own letter to Lieutenant-Governor Laird asking for help, as newly arriving settlers were encroaching on the land.[169] His letter—in which he notes is not only for his own grievance but on the entirety of the Métis population at Duck Lake and St. Laurent— calls attention to the concern of the "difficulties… continually arising touching the limits and rights of property of Land-holders in the country, and there is no proper authority to settle these questions however conducive to the peace and tranquillity of the Country."[170] Father André remarked that the land was surveyed for over two years, the land office established four years ago, land titles not allowed to be granted, and he felt it was "to be in the power of any evil designing man to disturb the peace of a settlement and to create bad feelings between neighbors."[171] In fact it was such an issue that settlers were also not able to gain title to land, they were encroaching onto the land that

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Volume XII (1891-1900)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, 1990, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/andre_alexis_12E.html.

[168] This translation is my own. The original states: "La grande difficulté qu'éprouvent les Métis à obtenir d'abbord l'arpentage de leurs terres conformément aux limites et à la forme actuelles de ces terres, la lenteur apportée àla confirnation de leurs titres et le quasi refus de leur accorder l'octroi demandé pour l'extinction de leurs droites Indiens, sont qujourd'huila cause de tout ce mécontentement. Plusieurs requêtes ont été adressées à Ottawa. Des délégues ont même été envoyés à la Capitale à grands frais et rien cependant n'arrive. Est-il une population dans aucune des autres provinces qui n'aurait pas déjà fait un revolution en règle, si elle subissait le même traitement? Non certainement." "Petite Chronique de St. Laurent (Original)," 1884, 60, Microfilm 1.68 St. Laurent Church, Saskatchewan Archives Board.

[169] "Copy of Petition from Reverend Father André of Duck Lake to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in Council," June 14, 1881, Department of the Interior, Saskatchewan Archives Board.

[170] "Copy of Petition from Reverend Father André of Duck Lake to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in Council," June 14, 1881, Department of the Interior, Saskatchewan Archives Board.

[171] "Copy of Petition from Reverend Father André of Duck Lake to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in Council."

André had fenced off for the Catholic mission. Father André wrote how a man named J. Kelly "jumped my claim, and not withstanding my protestations claimed the land as his own and put the frame of a house upon it, depriving me in that manner of half my property."[172] Father André's letter provides the details of how difficult the situation in the region was becoming. By the time of his letter, 1881, St. Laurent de Grandin had been established for almost a decade. The Métis and mission had developed plots of land, written petitions to gain title for several years, and settlers who took no heed to already claimed lots were entering the region. Further, the lack of authority given to the Land Office was creating a backlog in land titles being issued for any person in the region.

Father André's letter demonstrates that numerous petitions had been sent by 1881, and the community continued to send more. For example, in 1882 a petition was sent on September 4th, addressed to the Right Honorable Sir John A. Macdonald, Minister of the Interior, Ottawa.[173] In this petition, the community identified themselves as "French half-breeds, for the most part settled on the west bank of the Saskatchewan" who aimed to "set forth with confidence the painful position in which we are placed with reference to the lands occupied by us in this portion of the territory."[174] The petition clearly situated the issue as the Métis saw it, the lack of title to land they had settled. They wrote in a way in which they are trying to not position themselves as against the Dominion but rather perhaps at times ignorant of its regulations, "the surveyed lands being already occupied or sold, we were compelled to occupy lands not yet surveyed, being ignorant, for the most part, also, of the regulations of the Government respecting Dominion lands. Great then was our astonishment and perplexity when we were notified that when the lands are surveyed we shall be obliged to pay $2 an acre to the Government if our lands are included in odd-numbered section."[175] This petition advocated that they be given the land due to their "having so long held this country as its masters" and that their already occupied lots be given free grants in acknowledgement.[176] As in the other petitions sent, this appeal contains

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[172] "Copy of Petition from Reverend Father André of Duck Lake to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in Council."
[173] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, *Epitome of Parliamentary Documents in Connection with the North-West Rebellion, 1885,* 311.
[174] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, 311.
[175] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, 311.
[176] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, 311–12.

signatures of heads of families (and in some cases their sons) that are divided up to clearly list those in the community who had or had not taken scrip, signalling their knowledge of the agreement met regarding land rights through the Manitoba Act.[177] Through the petitions we see that communities across the northwest were creating assemblies in which these collective concerns were being addressed, albeit ignored by the federal government. The inclusion of the signatures and names of the families in the community demonstrates that the decisions to send the petitions were community based, not directed solely by the elected leadership.

Because of the lack of response to their petitions the Métis of St. Laurent, Batoche, and Prince Albert joined forces. This council followed the previous example seen in the Red River region in 1869-1870 and the earlier more local example regarding the concern over harvesting wood. Encouraged by leaders such as Charles Nolin and Gabriel Dumont, they held several assemblies to discuss the best approach that should be taken.[178] Prior to this, the communities were writing to the government separately; therefore, these meetings signal that the Métis believed that an organized approach combining several groups may receive more attention from the government. These assemblies eventually incorporated the English population in the area and culminated in a decision to drastically change tactics in April 1884.

Collectively, the Métis felt that they should gain title to the land based on the precedence of Manitoba. The meeting held on April 21, 1884, at Ekapow's house in St. Laurent included "the French and English Natives" and were meeting as they were "convinced that the government of Canada has taken possession of the Territories of the North-West without the assent of the Natives."[179] At this meeting Mr. John Ross was elected as president and Michel Dumas as secretary and interpreter, giving representation to both the English and French populations. While the Dumonts were important voices within these meetings, they were not chosen to lead. The choice of Ross and Dumas perhaps was done to allow all involved to feel that there was no power dynamic that favoured one group (French or English) over the other. The assembly resolved to

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[177] Canada Dept of the Secretary of State, 311–13.
[178] Dumont, *mémoires*, 50.
[179] It should be noted that this copy from the Provincial Archives of Manitoba is handwritten in English and likely not the original version. As such some terminology such as Native may not be accurate to the original. "Minutes to a Meeting April 21, 1884," April 21, 1884, P5998/2, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

"demand that at least the same rights and privileges as the people in Manitoba, since the North-West is much more considerable because of its riches (resources) and the rest… That the French and English Natives want their lands to be given to them without their having to pay an 'entry'."[180] In this statement the Métis are reminding the federal government that what they were asking for was nothing new, it was something the government had already agreed to a decade earlier to form the Province of Manitoba.

The assembly decided to request Louis Riel's assistance, believing his education and experience made him the best choice to meet their needs. It was decided "that a delegation be sent to Riel to consider the resolutions mentioned above so that we might be granted our just rights."[181] The decision to include the English-speaking community from Prince Albert was already creating a coalition similar to that of Red River, and Louis Riel had been successful as the leader of the provisional government there.[182] The assembly continued to follow Métis democratic processes and created a committee of three French-speaking and three English-speaking members to travel and request his leadership. Louis Riel agreed to their request, and upon their return to Batoche he led the election of a new council—le petit provisoire. This new council was formed to press the federal government for a "democratically elected responsible government, representation in the national Parliament and in cabinet, as well as local control of public lands."[183] Despite the fact that months of petitioning and networking had thus far been unsuccessful, Riel led the group in sending more petitions to the federal government. He then led the community in drafting one last petition to be personally handed to the government in Ottawa. The Métis decided the best action was to ask Lawrence Clarke to deliver the petition on their behalf—again, there was no response.[184] At the same time, there were rumours in Ottawa that the Métis were getting ready to take up arms, to which there was no truth. The federal government explored several options to stop the title claims and what they considered to be a threat to federal governance in the area. They attempted to bribe Louis Riel into leaving, believing that removing

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[180] "Minutes to a Meeting April 21, 1884," April 21, 1884, P5998/2, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.
[181] "Minutes to a Meeting April 21, 1884."
[182] Bob Beal and R. C. Macleod, *Prairie Fire: The 1885 Northwest Rebellion*, First Edition (Edmonton: McClelland & Stewart, 1999), 104.
[183] Saunders and Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, 29.
[184] Jean Teillet, *The North-West Is Our Mother*, 329.

him from the equation would quell the activism of the Métis; and, at the suggestion of Lieutenant-Governor Edgar Dewdney, they increased police presence in the area.[185] Up to this point, the Métis were only petitioning the federal government wanting to work within the Dominion of Canada's constitutional framework, asking for their rights as Indigenous peoples to be recognized.

In the face of an increasing police presence in the area the Métis developed a Bill of Rights in which they voiced their collective requests to the federal government. They were also faced with the issue of what to do if the Dominion created a military conflict. The Bill developed a set of policies the Métis felt were fair, aligning with previous requests sent in petitions, but also asked for the creation of two provinces—Alberta and Saskatchewan— and for the provincial legislatures to represent the population. Other requests on the Bill of Rights were grants similar to those in the Manitoba Act, that patents be issued for both Métis and white settlers who had earned rights of possession on their farms, that offices of trust be given to the residents of the region to remove disreputable outsiders, administration of the region to benefit the settler not outsiders, better provisions for First Nations peoples, customs and usages of the Métis be respected, Land Department move further from Winnipeg to prevent people from choosing to travel to Ottawa, and that timber regulations be loosened to show the settlers have rights in the country.[186] Overall the Bill then asked to see authority placed more in the hands of the people and less so in the Dominion, and in no way represented wanting to overthrow the Dominion of Canada or enter into a violent confrontation. This is further shown through the testimony of Patrice Fleury who noted that throughout the winter the younger Métis men had been agitated by the lack of response, but Louis Riel consistently advocated peace over violence, encouraging "Métis rights by petition and peaceful modes."[187] At the same time, there was news that the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) were on their way and that the "petition would be answered by powder and bullet…."[188] Concerned with this news, Gabriel told Louis Riel to leave because the government was aiming for him, and that he was safer in the United States and

[185] Teillet, 332–33.
[186] Teillet, 332–33.
[187] Patrice Fleury, "Fleury, Patrice" (1924), 6, A-515, Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, http://iportal.usask.ca/index.php?sid=304680825&id=17448&t=details.
[188] Fleury, 6.

perhaps could prevent any conflict.[189] Riel also wanted to leave, believing that his presence was no longer benefitting the group: "The government hates me because once before I made them give in, and this time they do not want me to be the strongest one. And so, I think it would be better if I left; I will leave you and once I have left, perhaps then will you obtain what you have been asking for more easily. Yes, I really believe that it would be better if you took me back to Montana."[190] However, as with any conflict, the Métis voiced their opinions and voted on which approach to take. The assembly insisted that Louis Riel stay, decided to bear arms, if necessary, elected a new provisional government —the Exovedate—to better lead in the changing situation, and elected Gabriel to lead the Métis army.[191] Once again, the Métis democratic system was enacted. The assembly believed that the federal government was sending police to arrest Gabriel and Louis Riel, and they collectively decided to take arms to prevent that from happening.

In the events that followed, the Canadian army marched toward Batoche, responding to petitions with a police force. A series of battles occurred at Duck Lake, Tourond's Coulee / Fish Creek, and Batoche before ending the conflict.[192] Gabriel, age fourty-eight, led the Métis forces as the Canadian Government advanced, but he deferred to Louis Riel for strategic decisions, as that was whom the community had elected as president.[193] These battles would be what Gabriel Dumont is best known for in Canadian and Métis historical narratives, but as shown in this chapter his legacy of leadership goes beyond the Resistance. While the 1885 North West Resistance was a tragic and violent series of events that could have been avoided had the federal government been willing to work with the Métis, the election of Louis Riel as strategist and Gabriel Dumont as military leader further illustrates the democratic leadership processes of the

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[189] Dumont, *mémoires*, 56.
[190] Dumont, 56.
[191] Dumont, 56–58; Teillet, *The North-West Is Our Mother*, 335.
[192] Beal and Macleod, *Prairie Fire*; Walter Hildebrandt, *Battle of Batoche: British Small Warfare and the Entrenched Metis* (Vancouver, BC, CAN: Talonbooks, 2015), http://site.ebrary.com/lib/alltitles/docDetail.action?docID=10960055; Teillet, *The North-West Is Our Mother*; Donald George McLean, *1885, Metis Rebellion or Government Conspiracy?*, Irene M. Spry Collection of Western Canadian History (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1985).
[193] Dumont, *mémoires*, 76.

Métis people.

Figure 21 Gabriel Dumont circa 1885-1895 courtesy Montana Historical Society

CONCLUSION

He was an organizer, and to be a good organizer, he would have to have been eloquent enough and vocal enough to express ideas and concerns amongst the Michif people but among all to the other First Nations that they, we lived, very closely with, and that's why I say he's the quintessential Michif person.

Bruce Flamont[194]

Gabriel Dumont's position within Métis society owes much to the leadership he provided over his lifetime. This means that Gabriel's leadership forms a major part of his significance within Métis historical consciousness; therefore, exploration of his life allows for a more in-depth understanding of how he came to occupy that position and what Métis leadership constituted during this period. Métis formal leadership system was unique to the Métis people, and it was developed to meet the community's needs. It was founded on kinship principles of responsibility, best described as wahkootowin, and Métis democracy. Métis leadership was limited in power and duration, and the democratic process was employed when needed, most often when multiple families joined forces, or when the broader community faced an issue. Métis leadership dissolved when the issues at hand were resolved, or when the situation changed.[195]

This chapter has explored three areas of Gabriel Dumont's leadership to highlight how Métis leadership remained consistent yet adaptable. The democratic process remained the preferred way in which communities chose leaders and granted them authority. Through the exploration of Gabriel's involvement in the buffalo hunt, St. Laurent de Grandin, and the North West Resistance of 1885, this chapter has shown how Métis governance chose and supported leaders. This process allowed leaders to best serve the community. The leaders elected were chosen as they had specific skills and expertise, and one person was not always the best choice for every situation. This democratic process allowed the community to elect the leader they believed was best and ensured that each family had input.

Furthermore, kinship responsibilities motivated those who held the skills and experience needed by their community to take on leadership roles. Accepting a leadership role was fulfilling a kinship responsibility to the family and community. As Bruce Flamont mentions, Gabriel held organizing and speaking skills that allowed him to be an effective leader for his community. Mentoring youth in the skills necessary for Métis life, including good leadership, maintained

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[194] Flamont, telephone interview with Krystl Raven.
[195] A discussion of how leadership was brief and established as needed is found in this round table discussion. Swain and Belcourt discuss how formal leadership dissolved when not needed by the broader community. Samantha Marie Nock, Molly Swain, and Christie Belcourt, "Métis Identity 2: Collectivity, Provisionality, and Being Our Own Bosses" (YouTube, October 11, 2021), https://youtu.be/6XjhgHdBbV4.

Métis conceptions of leadership through generations. In addition, the community members supported the leadership through their votes as well as their respect for the laws established by the council. Without Métis conceptions of kinship, the Métis democratic process was not successful.

Lastly, Métis governance excluded Métis women from elected leadership positions. This does not mean that women were not influential leaders within the family or community, but overall, the Métis democratic process excluded women from being elected to council in the nineteenth century. The Métis understanding of elected leadership was linked to Métis masculinity, as only men were eligible for elected leadership, the skills and experiences demonstrated by elected leaders was framed within the masculine context. The examples they provided to younger generations were given as an ideal for Métis masculinity. The mentorship that developed future elected leaders, like Gabriel, was provided by men and understood by the mentee lessons in being a Métis man, even if they did not take on leadership roles in their adulthood. This was likely a result of the fact that Métis leadership was developed in a culture influenced by the patriarchal Catholic Church and their Euro-Canadian forefathers.[196] Furthermore, Indigenous masculinities often viewed men as protectors, providers, and mentors, all of which align with Métis leadership shown in this chapter.[197] It is important to remember that, while the elected leadership represented the community, there were leaders of all ages and genders within communities and families. However, the exclusion of women from elected positions within the Métis democratic process also results in women not being recognized by colonial governments as leaders within their community, further excluding them from decision making processes as Dominion authority extended into the northwest. While the Métis people were not directly affected by the Indian Act and its legislations that affected First Nations governance, it cannot be ignored that the way in which Métis women were traditionally excluded from Métis councils was reinforced by the Canadian Government's lack of acknowledgement of women in leadership positions into the twentieth century.

This chapter has shown how Gabriel Dumont stepped into leadership positions as asked by his community as he had the skills and experience necessary to be a provider, protector, and

[196] Hokowhitu, "Producing Elite Indigenous Masculinities."
[197] Anderson, Innes, and Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities: Carrying the Bones of the Ancestors."

mentor. Gabriel recognized moments where he was not the best leader in a situation and would move between these elected positions and acting as just a member of the community. This signals his own awareness of his strengths and weaknesses as a leader, but also was something not seen as unusual due to Métis democratic governance structures. Because formal elected leadership did not always exist, it made space for elected officials to step down when required. Gabriel would continue working on behalf of his community, his role as a leader not ending with the 1885 North West Resistance. Gabriel's responsibility to the community continued as he found himself in a unique position to earn an income while advocating for his people.

4- Niyaanan Michif- We Are Michif

[H]e was a leader, and he was a strong part of his culture and the fact that post uprising he leads another wild life, you know, this idea of touring the East Coast, you know, from Philadelphia, down to New York, from New York City to smaller places in New York to Montana, to North Dakota to Montreal to possibly Paris.

Trevor Cameron- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[1]

The North West Resistance did not end Gabriel Dumont's role as leader for his community. Rather, we see Gabriel continuing his work as an advocate and leader, providing for both his family and community. Although many Métis people were escaping from the Batoche area, the Métis spirit was not defeated, and they did not stop advocating for their rights. Before fleeing to the United States to escape arrest by the North West Mounted Police (NWMP), Gabriel spent four days near Batoche, trying to locate Louis Riel to convince him to flee south as well.[2] This also gave him some time to focus on protecting his family—Madeleine, Veronique, and Alexandre, seek his father's advice, provide food to Madeleine to distribute to the other women and children in the community, and help other fleeing families.[3] Gabriel crossed the border with Michel Dumas, made arrangements with allies to protect those who were travelling behind them, and surrendered to the authorities at Fort Assiniboine, where they were quickly released.[4] In the following weeks, the Métis who had travelled south made plans for the future. Some were arranging an escape for Louis Riel, while others were arranging food for the community, and Gabriel battled injuries that left him lightheaded and weak.[5] Gabriel had several wounds from the battles, including from a bullet grazing his head. Stories say that Gabriel learned to cover his light-headedness by claiming to need a nap and then sitting with his back to a wall to cover the fact he had passed out.[6] This put Gabriel in a precarious position; he had no income, could not

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[1] Trevor Cameron, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, January 24, 2020.
[2] Gabriel Dumont, *Mémoires: les Mémoires dictés par Gabriel Dumont et le Récit Gabriel Dumont*, ed. Denis P. Combet, trans. Lise Gaboury-Diallo (Saint-Boniface, Man: Éditions du Blé, 2006), 102; Charles Duncan Thompson, *Red Sun: Gabriel Dumont, The Folk Hero*, 1st edition (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2017), 210.
[3] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 210.
[4] Dumont, *mémoires*, 104; Thompson, *Red Sun*, 213.
[5] Thompson, 212–14.
[6] Thompson, 213.

return home, and he was in poor physical shape as he struggled to recover from his injuries, but he tried his best to cover the extent of his injuries to not worry his family and community about his ability to provide for them.

Gabriel, at age forty-eight, also suddenly acquired fame, as the 1885 North West Resistance had garnered substantial international attention in the media. Although his leadership had attracted the attention of the federal government before the Resistance, the events in 1885 were widely covered in newspapers across North America and the world. Newspapers situated Louis Riel as the primary cause of the conflict, smeared not just for his Indigeneity but also his Frenchness.[7] Newspapers across Canada at the time publicized conversations of Canadian and American policy regarding civilizing Indigenous peoples, and played into stereotypes of the Métis as "'bloodthirsty,' diabolical,' murderous hordes,' … on the 'warpath,' a label normally associated with American Natives."[8] The news coverage of the Resistance also featured Gabriel's name in many of the columns, bringing notoriety to him as the only other named individual within the Métis' actions. This placed Gabriel in the spotlight and afforded him opportunities on which he could capitalise.[9]

The newspapers, as they did with Louis Riel, generated an image of Gabriel to the public, the *Winnipeg Daily Sun* for example cast Gabriel as a leader "known to be an uneasy mortal constantly agitating and inciting the men to insurrection."[10] On April 20, 1885, the *Toronto Globe,* a liberal paper that blamed the Resistance on Prime Minister John A. Macdonald, portrayed Gabriel as a violent leader, and called him the "commander of the Rebel Forces" who was the "most active man in the rebel ranks, and is compelling many of his followers by threats of death."[11] Here Gabriel was cast as the 'savage' aligning with the broader themes of news

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[7] Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson, *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers* (Univ. of Manitoba Press, 2011), 79.
[8] Anderson and Robertson, 71.
[9] Préfontaine's book features the coverage that Gabriel received in newspapers and magazines. Before the Resistance, Gabriel appeared in local papers twice. Once for a court case regarding boarding fees for a horse in 1860, and subsequently in 1878 regarding stories that he had found gold in his cellar at St. Laurent, which he confirmed was true, and he sought to get protection for the claim. Darren R. Préfontaine, *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words* (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2011), 255.
[10] "Dumont's Band," *Winnipeg Daily Sun*, March 24, 1885, 1.
[11] As reprinted in: Préfontaine, *Gabriel Dumont*, 256.

coverage on the Resistance, even the anglophone papers who were critical of Canada's involvement were prone to stereotyping the Métis. In contrast, some reporters, particularly those in Québec, appeared to view Gabriel much more favourably: "Gabriel Dumas [sic] commanded the rebels with wonderful skills…. The rebels seemed to be composed of about an equal number of half-breeds and Indians, in all not more than two hundred. All were commanded by Gabriel Dumont."[12] The Francophone reporters were likely less biased against the Métis owing to the previous support for Louis Riel by Francophone communities in the east. Through April and May 1885, several papers, including those in New York City and London, England, reported on the events occurring near and around Batoche, and, overall, the Métis, led by Gabriel and Louis Riel, were portrayed as formidable adversaries to the Canadian troops. Darren Préfontaine notes that many newspapers even provided

> poignant vignettes of Gabriel Dumont's life that do not exist in the oral history or in the documented historical record. For example, we learn that Dumont received international attention in the British Empire and the United States, most notably in the New York Times following the 1885 Resistance; that he rescued children from a burning fire while on a speaking engagement in Montreal; that for a brief time, mainly foreign newspapers reflected on his activities in the United States during his American exile; that he was proposed to by a wealthy widow while in Québec, declined her hand out of love of his people; that he was fêted while in Québec during his speaking tours; that he was a guest of honour during a feast held by Wild West show participants; that he enjoyed smoking *tabac canadien* (French-Canadian pipe tobacco); and that he was concerned about Aboriginal peoples' rights in places as far away as British Columbia, Montana, and North Dakota.[13]

Further, Matthew Barrett shows that while criticism of the Métis' political cause remained consistent, through media coverage Gabriel Dumont became a military leader praised "as an exemplary military hero and frontiersman… [who] represented an ideal definition of masculine

[12] As reprinted in Préfontaine, 258.
[13] Préfontaine, 255.

vigour and strength"[14] in the late nineteenth century. Barrett argues that much of the commentary during the Resistance turned him into a "powerful commander of a lost cause and the icon of a lost world."[15] In particular Barrett highlights how Victorian and Métis masculinity were conceived differently, and that Canadian nationalists "manipulated representations of Dumont in order to serve their own ideological and nation-building purposes" by separating him from Métis advocacy to acknowledge him as a model of Victorian masculinity.[16] Victorian men saw Dumont's skills and bravery as an authentic form of manhood that was demonstrated through military performance, where Métis and other Indigenous understandings of masculinity emphasized their collective roles within the society. For example, Barrett positions the buffalo hunt as an example: for Victorian (and British) society, hunting was a solitary event and achievement of men alone; for the Métis hunting was a collective and communal event, where men were just one part of a larger effort. In both versions men may be the one who shoots the prey, however, the understandings of the hunt in connection to masculinity are distinctly different.[17] Altogether, the considerable coverage of the events of the Resistance, and especially the way in which Gabriel was highlighted by many writers, granted him international attention and brought forth opportunities he seized to continue advocating for and to support his family and community.

Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is useful for examining how Gabriel mobilized his fame and Métis identity in the post-Resistance period. Bourdieu recognizes three forms of capital: economic, social, and cultural. Capital takes time to accumulate but can be used within the social world to afford social mobility, economic capital can be transformed into money; cultural and social capital in the right circumstances can be transformed into both economic capital and movement within the social hierarchy.[18] Cultural capital exists in three states: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized. The embodied state refers to someone's mind

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[14] Matthew Barrett, "Hero of the Half-Breed Rebellion: Gabriel Dumont and Late Victorian Military Masculinity," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue d'études Canadiennes* 48, no. 3 (2014): 80.
[15] Barrett, 98.
[16] Barrett.
[17] Barrett, 85.
[18] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital." In *The Sociology of Economic Life*, ed. Mark Granovetter and Richard Swedberg (Routledge, 2018), 79.

and body and how they invest in their culture, which is revealed through things like their patterns of speech or style of dress.[19] The objectified state refers to objects that are cultural goods, such as photos, books, and so on. The last state is the institutionalized state, in which a person's cultural capital is recognized by outsiders and can be exchanged for other forms of capital, including economic and political.[20] Cultural capital is often a gendered concept, what aspects of Gabriel's culture were commodifiable in exchange with other communities (settler state) depended on how culture was perceived by the other group. As such, the cultural capital Gabriel relies on as explored in this chapter is distinctly connected to his Métis masculinity and how that masculinity was perceived by others.

Academics have applied Bourdieu's theory of capital within the Canadian Indigenous context. Courtney Mason examines how the Nakoda—when the Dominion Government seized their land to create a national park—participated in government-sponsored events to perform their outlawed cultural practices and maintain a presence on their homelands. Mason refers to this as cultural capital, as the Nakoda portrayed a particular version of their culture for their own financial and cultural gain.[21] The Nakoda's participation in such events was not unique, but rather part of a trend of Indigenous peoples taking advantage of Canadian society's interest in Indigenous life, albeit one based on an imagined reality, as colonial policies attempted to strip this identity from them. Also useful in this regard is Max Hamon's biography of Louis Riel, which examines his life through the concept of social capital. Hamon examines how he uses the relationships he developed during his education to create networking opportunities when he needed to campaign for his exile to be overturned.[22] These two examples, closely connected to Gabriel's experiences, demonstrate how Indigenous peoples persisted despite colonial attempts at assimilation or extinction; and, one particular way in which some did this was to take advantage of opportunities to use their culture to their benefit. In a time where many Métis struggled under government surveillance and increasingly oppressive policies, and many withdrew public

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[19] Bourdieu, 79.
[20] Bourdieu, 79.
[21] Courtney W. Mason, *Spirits of the Rockies: Reasserting an Indigenous Presence in Banff National Park* (University of Toronto Press, 2014).
[22] M. Max Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise: Louis Riel and the Métis Nation That Canada Never Was*, 1840–1875 (Montreal; Kingston; London; Chicago: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020).

expressions of their culture and identity to protect themselves, Gabriel received opportunities that relied on his cultural capital and required him to put himself, his reputation, and his culture on display.[23] Victorian interest in life in the North American West created commercial and political opportunities, but they required Gabriel to portray a version of himself that met the audience's expectations. Thus, I argue the political and cultural climate in North America allowed Gabriel to continue his role as leader of his community, turning the difficult events of the Resistance into a livelihood that relied on his Métis identity and allowed him to continue advocating and providing for his community and fulfill his kinship responsibilities, despite his injuries. Moreover, because Gabriel had become famous, he was best able to use this opportunity to gain mobility through American and Canadian societies. This chapter focuses on two arenas in which Gabriel worked towards this goal. First, I look at his time as a performer in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show. Then this chapter focuses on Gabriel's time as a public speaker to Francophone groups in both the United States of America and Canada, revealing how Gabriel was a savvy political actor, and much more complex than the colonial narratives portrayed.

GABRIEL DUMONT'S CULTURAL CAPITAL

No, he was not rich, far from it. He was having to sell his own photo, to raise money, and that's not a rich man who has to do that.

Trevor Cameron[24]

To escape arrest, many Métis, including the Dumont family, escaped over the American border, leaving their livelihoods and belongings behind. This period in the United States of America would bring a new phase of Gabriel's life, one that would bring him some fame on the back of the media attention the Resistance had attracted, but it would not mean he would become a rich man. His life at Gabriel's Crossing had been quite comfortable, but his time in the United States, as Trevor Cameron states above, would not bring Gabriel's family wealth. Thankfully, the Dumonts had the support of their family and the Métis communities south of the border, and they were able to find safe places to live—they even built their own home near Lewiston in the winter

[23] F. Laurie Barron, "The Indian Pass System in the Canadian West, 1882–1935," *Prairie Forum* 13, no. 1 (1988): 25–42.
[24] Cameron, telephone interview with Krystl Raven.

of 1885–86.[25] The Métis community in Lewistown Montana had ties to both Pembina and Red River, as a group of Métis followed the buffalo in the 1860s to Milk River, Montana. By 1879 they formed more permanent settlements along the Spring Creek, founding Lewistown, one of the oldest Métis settlements in the state. The community here, and further south on the Milk Creek created a kinship network which included relatives from Canada after the 1885 North West Resistance who fled south (see figure 22 for a map of these settlements in relation to Batoche and St. Laurent).[26] Michel Hogue provides a detailed account of the mass Métis migration to the Milk River Valley encouraged by structural changes in the fur trade economy as it was being subsumed by agricultural and market capitalism.[27] It was these kinship connections that the Dumont family and others from Batoche relied on when first arriving in the United States.

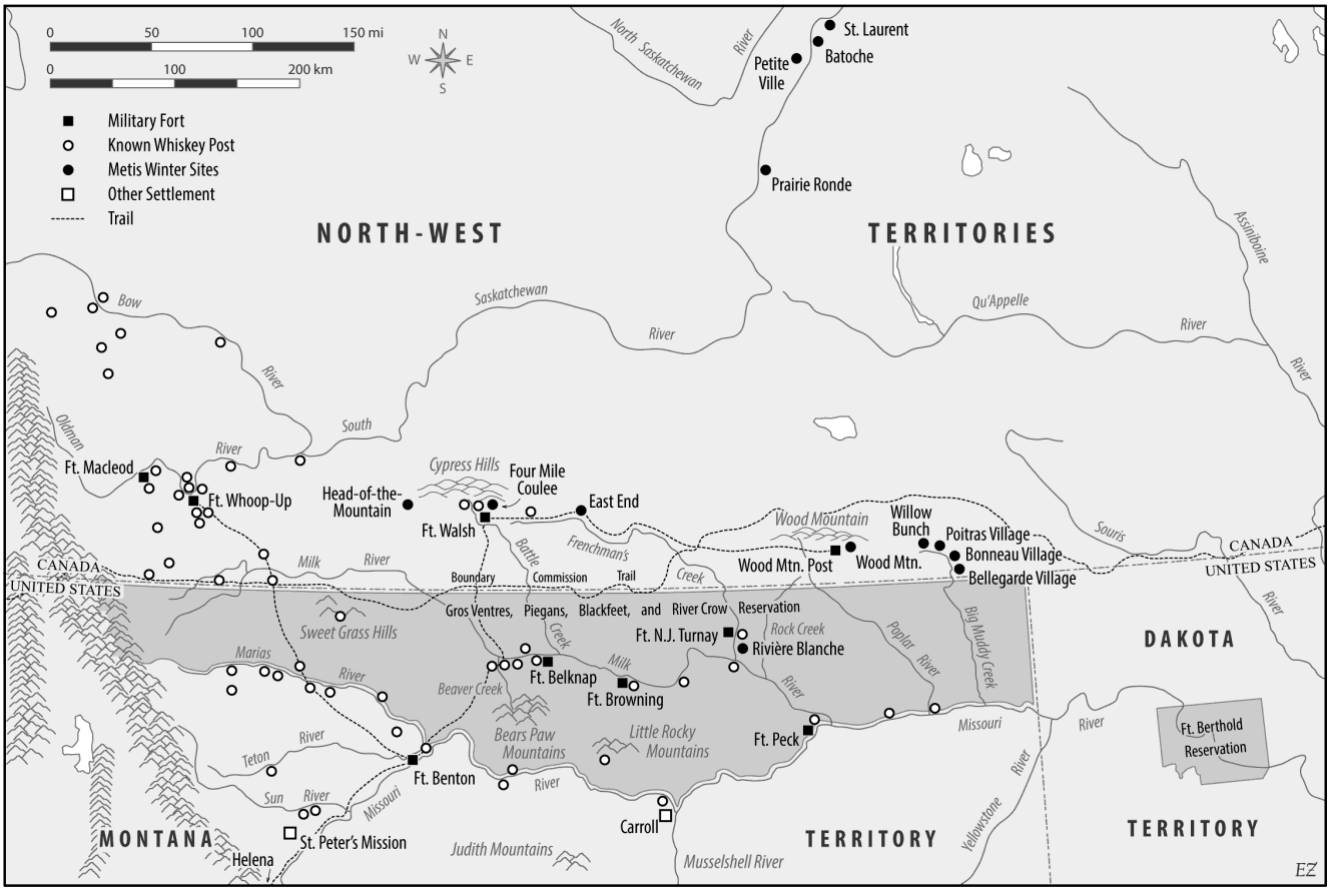

Figure 22 The Milk River Borderlands credit: Hogue (2015).

[25] "Bitter Reminiscences," *The Livingston Enterprise*, April 9, 1887, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86075261/1887-04-09/ed-1/seq-4/.
[26] Martha Foster, "Spring Creek (Lewiston) Montana," The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture, January 16, 2014, http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/14628.
[27] Michel Hogue, *Metis and the Medicine Line: Creating a Border and Dividing a People* (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2015), 65–66.

The 1885 North West Resistance stripped many Batoche residents of a comfortable living, including Gabriel and Madeleine. As shown in previous chapters, the couple had developed a successful business that supplemented the buffalo hunt, and after the North West Resistance they had no immediate way to generate income.[28] In addition, Gabriel had suffered severe injuries in battle and needed time to recuperate.[29] The Dumonts' situation was not unusual, as the Resistance had resulted in many Métis struggling to support themselves. Survival was important, and during the first winter after the Resistance. One example of this kinship support is shown in an encounter described by Élie Dumont, Gabriel's nephew, to Charles Thompson. When Gabriel and Michel first crossed the border, they had been met by the Piikani, including a man whom Gabriel had captured and smoked the pipe with two decades before, forming an important relationship between the two.[30] Upon meeting in Montana, the men shook hands, and the Piikani gifted Gabriel with four horses and agreed to help locate the other exiles and ensure their well-being.[31] After the Resistance the Exovedate at Batoche prioritized Gabriel's attention to advocating for the broader Métis community (including attempts to get released those who had been arrested) and supporting the Métis who were struggling financially.[32] This type of kinship support from Métis and First Nations allies aided the exiles in this difficult period as they worked to rebuild their lives.

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[28] M. Scott Taylor, "Buffalo Hunt: International Trade and the Virtual Extinction of the North American Bison," *American Economic Review* 101, no. 7 (December 2011): 3162–95, https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.101.7.3162.

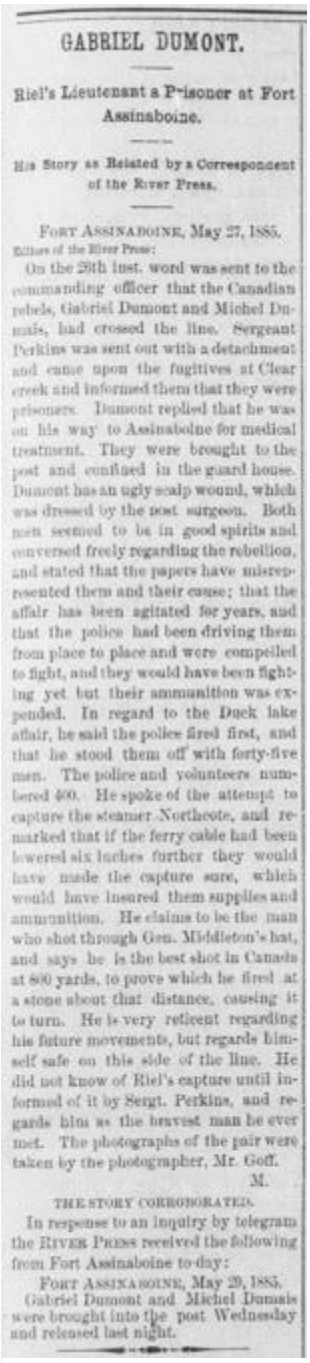
[29] Thompson notes that when he was stronger Gabriel joined the hunts to provide for his people and the order in which this information is added makes it appear this took place before he joined the Wild West Show. However, as shown later in this chapter, Gabriel notes his first time on a horse in a long time was in the Wild West show. I believe Gabriel's ability to join the hunt was then after he joined the Wild West show in one of his return trips to Montana. We know that Gabriel was on horseback to escape to the United States, but it is unlikely he rode much once he arrived in Lewiston due to his injuries. Thompson, *Red Sun*, 214.

[30] Thompson, 213.

[31] Thompson, 213.

[32] Thompson, 224–25.

The press continued to bring attention to Gabriel, reporting on his movements after the Resistance. The Fort Benton *River Press* on June 3, 1885, featured a column on "Gabriel Dumont: Riel's Lieutenant a Prisoner at Fort Assiniboine, His Story as Related by a Correspondent of the River Press," from May 27, 1885. This article gave a detailed description of Gabriel Dumont and Michel Dumas being met by Sergeant Perkins and his detachment at Clear Creek. Upon being informed they were under arrest "Dumont replied that he was on his way to Assinaboine for medical treatment. They were brought to the post and confined in the guard house. Dumont has an ugly scalp wound, which was dressed by the post surgeon. Both men seemed to be in good spirits and conversed freely regarding the rebellion and stated that the papers have misrepresented them and their cause."[33] Gabriel and Michel's release was reported in *The Kimball Graphic* several days later, again on the front page, "the secretary of war has directed that an order be issued to Lieut. Col. Coppinger in command at Fort Assinaboine, that Gabriel Dumont, Riel's lieutenant, should be released from arrest. No demand was made to our government that Dumont should be extradited by the Canadian authorities."[34] *The River Press,* also published an article regarding an interview on June 10th, 1885, having sent out a journalist to interview them, reporting on their trip south and publishing a letter of support from sympathizers located at Fort Assinaboine.[35] This news coverage meant that Gabriel maintained a presence within the American public's attention as Riel's months-long trial captured the world's attention. Gabriel became the Métis leader the public could access. This led to an opportunity that not only supported his family but also allowed him to help the community—a spot in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show.



GABRIEL DUMONT.

Riel's Lieutenant a Prisoner at Fort Assinaboine.

His Story as Related by a Correspondent of the River Press.

FORT ASSINABOINE, May 27, 1885.

Editor of the River Press:

On the 26th inst. word was sent to the commanding officer that the Canadian rebels, Gabriel Dumont and Michel Dumais, had crossed the line. Sergeant Perkins was sent out with a detachment and came upon the fugitives at Clear creek and informed them that they were prisoners. Dumont replied that he was on his way to Assinaboine for medical treatment. They were brought to the post and confined in the guard house. Dumont has an ugly scalp wound, which was dressed by the post surgeon. Both men seemed to be in good spirits and conversed freely regarding the rebellion, and stated that the papers have misrepresented them and their cause; that the affair has been agitated for years, and that the police had been driving them from place to place and were compelled to fight, and they would have been fighting yet but their ammunition was expended. In regard to the Duck lake affair, he said the police fired first, and that he stood them off with forty-five men. The police and volunteers numbered 400. He spoke of the attempt to capture the steamer Northcote, and remarked that if the ferry cable had been lowered six inches further they would have made the capture sure, which would have insured them supplies and ammunition. He claims to be the man who shot through Gen. Middleton's hat, and says he is the best shot in Canada at 800 yards, to prove which he fired at a stone about that distance, causing it to turn. He is very reticent regarding his future movements, but regards himself safe on this side of the line. He did not know of Riel's capture until informed of it by Sergt. Perkins, and regards him as the bravest man he ever met. The photographs of the pair were taken by the photographer, Mr. Goff.

M.

THE STORY CORROBORATED.

In response to an inquiry by telegram the RIVER PRESS received the following from Fort Assinaboine to-day:

FORT ASSINABOINE, May 29, 1885.

Gabriel Dumont and Michel Dumais were brought into the post Wednesday and released last night.

Figure 23 *The River Press,* June 3, 1885

[33] "Gabriel Dumont Riel's Lieutenant a Prisoner at Fort Assinaboine," *The River Press,* June 3, 1885.
[34] "Gabriel Dumont Let Free," *The Kimball Graphic,* June 12, 1885.
[35] "Dumont and Dumais," *The River Press,* June 10, 1885, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85053157/1885-06-10/ed-1/seq-3/.

Figure 24 Gabriel Dumont, 1885 at Fort Benton courtesy Montana Historical Society

The Performer

Gabriel Dumont went from leading [the Métis fighters] to down into the States and survived by traveling with the Wild West Show.

Curtis DuMont- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[36]

Gabriel, continuing to serve his community as a provider and leader, joined the Wild West show for two reasons: financial support and political advocacy. Charles Thompson writes that the post-Resistance period was difficult for the Métis in Montana. A famine, combined with

[36] Curtis DuMont, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 10, 2020.

a lack of work opportunities saw Métis taking on any job they could find, "food was more important than pride."[37] Gabriel had his own reasons to join the show: financial security, the opportunity to meet potential allies, and the promise the show planned to travel to France. Thus far, Gabriel had not shied away from the attention the Resistance had brought, and the headliner of the show had to be someone who was sufficiently willing and confident to be in the public eye, and Gabriel did not lack confidence or eloquence. Furthermore, the show's plan to travel to France aligned with Gabriel's desire to ask France for "aid, advice, and (for France to use its) influence… with Great Britain, (so the exiles would) be allowed to return and occupy the lands from which they have been wrongfully driven and which caused the rebellion, and their flight to American Territory."[38] As such, Gabriel continued his role as leader and advocated for the Métis, trading his notoriety as a military leader for economic and political gain.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West was the most popular of a series of shows featuring frontier life that occurred in the nineteenth century. These shows reflected and shaped the ideologies of the time, supporting the frontier myth and its connection to American identity.[39] Buffalo Bill's Wild West, which ran from 1883 to 1916, featured the most extravagant parts of life in the West, including sharpshooting, buffalo hunting, and recreations of well-known battles. Buffalo Bill's show was like the others of the time, a two to three-hour display divided into several acts including a grand entry, demonstrations of cowboy skills, exhibitions of Indigenous ceremonies and life, historical re-enactments, military displays, international acts demonstrating the diversity of race/ethnicity, and circus acts.[40] In addition to travelling around the United States, the Wild West show traveled to Europe between 1889 and 1892 as well as in 1903.[41] The Wild West saw its best success after the addition of Nate Salsbury, a theater businessman, who reorganized the production, further in 1885 the show began to use Indigenous peoples to create "an atmosphere of

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[37] Charles Trottier to Thompson (1944) Thompson, *Red Sun*, 225.
[38] John C. Ewers, Floyd W. Sharrock, and Susan R. Sharrock, *Ethnological Report on the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy Reservation and the Little Shell Band of Indians*, Chippewa Indians 6 (New York: Garland Pub. Inc, 1974), 98.
[39] Linda Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows: From Buffalo Bill to Euro Disney* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2015), 5.
[40] Scarangella McNenly, 24.
[41] Scarangella McNenly, 26; Venita Datta, "Buffalo Bill Goes to France: French-American Encounters at the Wild West Show, 1889-1905," *French Historical Studies* 41, no. 3 (August 2018): 525–55, https://doi.org/10.1215/00161071-6682156.

impending danger."[42] It was this addition of Indigenous leaders and participants that had Buffalo Bill seek out Gabriel Dumont.

Indigenous peoples' decision to participate in the shows countered the assimilation policies of federal governments by highlighting Indigenous culture. As such, the shows created a power struggle between the producers, colonial governments, and Indigenous performers.[43] The late nineteenth century saw American and Canadian governments shifting their colonial policies toward assimilation (and extermination) of Indigenous peoples. By the 1870s, Indigenous peoples across the world saw themselves visited by "agents of the state and or moral improvement… increasingly forced to adopt the dress, life-styles, and religion of the dominant populations, or they were corralled off into reservations and special homelands to be exploited as pools of labor for capitalist farms and mines."[44] In Canada, policies such as the *Indian Act (1876),* and the implementation of the Pass System after the Resistance were just two aspects of a broader colonial policy designed to isolate, assimilate, or exterminate Indigenous peoples. In the United States of America offices such as the American Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) were staunchly against Indigenous people's participation in these types of shows.[45] The OIA's policies restricted Indigenous people's employment and recruitment options, with the aim of encouraging jobs that accelerated their assimilation into American society. For instance, Section 9 of the 1834 *Reorganization Act* aimed to recruit Indigenous people into government jobs, such as blacksmithing, translation, teaching, and other agency positions, to encourage boarding school graduates to abandon their traditional lifestyles and maintain the assimilation that had been achieved through these schools.[46] As such, Indigenous peoples on both sides of the forty-ninth parallel faced increasing restrictions on their cultures and employment opportunities making shows like Buffalo Bill's an appealing option.

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[42] Scarangella McNenly, 25.
[43] Scarangella McNenly, 39.
[44] C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons*, The Blackwell History of the World (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2004), 437.
[45] Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*, 40–44.
[46] Novak notes that boarding school enrollment had doubled from 1880 to 1890. In addition, American society was shifting toward white-collar work by the end of the nineteenth century. Steven J. Novak, "The Real Takeover of the BIA: The Preferential Hiring of Indians," *The Journal of Economic History* 50, no. 3 (1990): 642.

The Wild West show relied on the popular notion of the vanishing Indian. Phillip Deloria describes the history behind the vanishing Indian image, linking it to the period of American Indigenous removal in the nineteenth century. Deloria writes that American imagery linked Indigenous peoples with the past, and that American policy makers and society believed that "less advanced societies should disappear in the presence of those more advanced."[47] That ideology moved the Indigenous person to a place of nostalgia, where "one could yet hear their rustling footsteps and find their still-warm campfires."[48] Deloria notes this meant that in this period the Indigenous person, who used to be seen as American, was now positioned as the Other, shown best in Indian plays in the early nineteenth century, the forerunner to the Wild West shows.[49] This positioning included portraying Indigenous people as part of a "natural" world, untouched by progress. Victorian understanding of indigeneity was based on stereotypes rather than accurate representation of Indigenous cultures. This idealism was tied to Enlightenment categories of nature and culture and Indigenous peoples were "imagined by many tourists to be embedded within the 'natural' environment and, as a result, a significant component of tourists' experiences."[50] Connecting Indigenous peoples to the naturalness of the imagined western frontier locked Indigenous peoples into the binary of the primitive "noble savage" and the progress of the expanding Empire. While the parks brought tourists to nature and Indigenous people, shows like the Wild West and the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago brought both to the tourists, making Indigenous peoples an essential part of the experience.[51] Because these cultural demonstrations of indigeneity required a portrayal that met the audience's expectations—Indigenous peoples as primitive—the performers understood were not projecting an accurate representation of their lives. Therefore, many Indigenous people across North America chose occupations that promoted narratives that positioned progress and modernization as the ideal and indigeneity as primitive.

Buffalo Bill's show was centred on a framework of similar narratives. The discourses of the "savage and vanishing Indian, the frontier, heroic individualism, and progress" were part of

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[47] Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (Yale University Press, 2022), 64, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2g5918z.
[48] Deloria, 64.
[49] Deloria, 64.
[50] Mason, *Spirits of the Rockies*, 86.
[51] Mason, 87.

an attempt to present an authentic version of the West.[52] The American and European public were not only receptive, but obsessed with the Indigenous participants in the show.[53] Because of this the Wild West show played its part in the continuation of the vanishing Indian trope, as they created a "note of extinction tourism to the show 'the native Indians are fast passing away, and the redskin warriors, who terrorised the frontier of the western United States, will soon join the braves who have passed to the happy hunting ground.'"[54] The audience interpreted this as a limited time opportunity to see Indigenous peoples before they fully disappeared into modernity, making the Wild West show a form of entertainment and museum.

The reality was that the Indigenous actors became well versed in how to navigate white society while maintaining their own culture. While the shows relied on the trope of the vanishing Indian, Indigenous participants were a visual reminder to the public and governments that Indigenous people had not disappeared.[55] Indigenous participation also added authenticity to the performances, but produced a double bind, the narratives of the shows portrayed them as colonial subjects while simultaneously providing them with a sense of freedom from colonial oppression.[56] Despite this complexity, throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century and into the first half of the twentieth century, Indigenous peoples continued to participate in a variety of events, art shows, cultural exhibitions, and performances like the Wild West show.[57]

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[52] Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*, 26–27.
[53] Scarangella McNenly, 26–27.
[54] Jane Lovell and Sam Hitchmough, "Simulated Authenticity: Storytelling and Mythic Space on the Hyper-Frontier in Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Westworld," *Tourist Studies* 20, no. 4 (December 2020): 420, https://doi.org/10.1177/1468797620937912.
[55] Abigail Markwyn, "Beyond the End of the Trail: Indians at San Francisco's 1915 World's Fair," *Ethnohistory* 63, no. 2 (April 1, 2016): 274–75, https://doi.org/10.1215/00141801-3455299.
[56] L. G. Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883–1933*. 1st ed. (Albuquerque, N.M.: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 1–9; Lisa Blee, "'I Came Voluntarily to Work, Sing and Dance': Stories from the Eskimo Village at the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition," *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 101, no. 3/4 (2010): 126; Paige Sylvia Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 201.
[57] Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883–1933*; Wanapitei Colloquium, Ute Lischke, and David McNab, *Walking a Tightrope Aboriginal People and Their Representations* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005); Allan Downey, *The Creator's Game: Lacrosse, Identity, and Indigenous Nationhood* (UBC Press, 2018); Mason,

Although the shows tended to be sympathetic and respectful toward Indigenous peoples, they still portrayed Indigenous peoples in a certain way that promoted the narrative of progress. Performers were there to add excitement and authenticity to the show, but the portrayals were often a facade.[58] The show was a "nostalgic fantasy about a lost frontier wilderness idyll" that also forwarded the ideals of American progress and modernity.[59] The narrative of American progress was important, but it needed a violent opposition to justify colonization. By celebrating admirable qualities in Indigenous warriors, imperial power structures were reinforced as necessary and superior. In many ways, Buffalo Bill represented American progress, authenticity, and frontier masculinity. His time working as a marshal for the

Figure 25 Tatanka Iyotake and Buffalo Bill. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Spirits of the Rockies; Joy Hendry, *Reclaiming Culture: Indigenous People and Self-Representation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), http://site.ebrary.com/id/10135408; Philip Joseph Deloria, *Playing Indian*, Yale Historical Publications (Unnumbered) (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998); Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*; Christian F. Feest, ed., *Indians and Europe: An Interdisciplinary Collection of Essays*, 1. Aufl, Forum 11 (Aachen [West Germany]: Alano Verlag / Edition Herodot, 1989); Louis S. Warren, *Buffalo Bill's America* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2007); Markwyn, "Beyond The End of the Trail"; Allison Fuss Mellis, *Riding Buffaloes and Broncos: Rodeo and Native Traditions in the Northern Great Plains* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2003).

[58] Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*, 22,72.

[59] Lovell and Hitchmough, "Simulated Authenticity" 412.

US government gave him legitimacy as an expert on the West, and the Indigenous headliners had to be portrayed accurately without countering the narrative of American progress.[60]

Exploring why other Indigenous people decided to participate in these shows offers insight into why the Métis encouraged Gabriel to join Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Overall, while limited evidence exists, there are some indications as to why Indigenous people participated in these events, and recent scholarship looks beyond the assumption that these were merely exploitative situations. Historian Linda Scarangella McNenly argues that Indigenous participation in these shows was a way of maintaining agency and most participants were aware of the complexities contained in their participation, but the benefits outweighed the concerns of, for instance, portraying a stereotype of their culture.[61] Income seems to have been the primary motivation for many participants, and some were sufficiently astute to negotiate substantial wages for themselves and others. For instance, Tatanka Iyotake (Sitting Bull) negotiated substantial salaries for the other performers from the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show: $25 per month for men and $15 per month for women. The Yupik performers who participated in the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in 1909 received $10 per month.[62] In many cases it can be inferred that their ability to negotiate their wages was based on the success previous participants created in drawing a crowd. For example, the Kwakwaka'wakw performers that joined the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, earned $20 per month for a seven-and-a-half month contract.[63] This group had taken part in the earlier 1880 Columbian Exposition held in Paris.[64] There is also evidence that these groups were particular in what performance work they chose, and news of bad employers spread quickly between communities. The Kwakwaka'wakw were careful about which positions they accepted, turning down a tour in Europe owing to stories of kidnappings overseas, but accepted the offer to join the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago based on favourable reports from former

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[60] Barrett, "Hero of the Half-Breed Rebellion," 89.
[61] Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows: From Buffalo Bill to Euro Disney*.
[62] Blee, "I Came Voluntarily to Work, Sing and Dance," 129.
[63] Raibmon, *Authentic Indians*, 50.
[64] Frederick Starr, "Anthropology at the World's Fair," *Popular Science Monthly* 43 (September 1893), https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Popular_Science_Monthly/Volume_43/September_1893/Anthropology_at_the_World%27s_Fair.

participants.[65] Consistently wages were substantial when compared to the labour wages at the time. However, Indigenous women were paid substantially less than the male performers, following the broader gendered wage trend in the United States and abroad. Overall evidence indicates that income was the primary reason for accepting offers for this type of work, but the ability to exhibit cultural practices also appealed to some groups.

As colonial policies were outlawing Indigenous cultural practices, participation in shows allowed Indigenous people to continue their ceremonies in some form. The shows required Indigenous participants to portray what the audience considered authentic indigeneity, and cultural practices were a necessary part of this. For this reason, the organizers encouraged the cultural demonstrations that were otherwise outlawed, allowing Indigenous peoples to publicly resist against colonial policies. Historian Paige Raibmon highlights that the Kwakwaka'wakw were not opposed to co-opting their culture to entertain others at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago,

> despite the spatial, seasonal, and social recontextualization that marked the Chicago performances, significant elements of continuity linked the international stage with the local one. These elements, likely of great significance to the performers, were largely invisible and probably irrelevant to Chicago spectators. Aboriginal performances for non-Aboriginal audiences commonly include elements of significance to cultural insiders that are invisible to outsiders.[66]

[65] Raibmon, *Authentic Indians*, 51.
[66] Raibmon, 64.

Figure 26 Kwakwaka'wakw at Columbian Exposition Paris 1880 c. Popular Science Monthly Vol 43 Sept. 1893

The Kwakwaka'wakw were portraying a version of their culture and lives that the audience expected, yet they were also able to use the performances to continue practising their culture in ways that were important to them.[67] By participating in the shows, groups like the Kwakwaka'wakw were exchanging their cultural capital for economic gains. It is important to note that some performers had issues such as non-payment, that pay rates were not the same for everyone, and that there were different power dynamics at play, but overall, the choice to participate was one that many performers sought out and viewed as a beneficial relationship.[68] Additionally, they were also showing their savviness at negotiating the colonial restrictions placed upon them as Indigenous peoples, while simultaneously thumbing their nose to those same policies by exhibiting their culture in such a public format.

[67] Many other examples can be found in the following works: Mason, *Spirits of the Rockies*; Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians*, 1883–1933; Deloria, *Playing Indian*; Feest, *Indians and Europe*; Warren, *Buffalo Bill's America*; Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*.
[68] Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*, 53–71.

For shows such as the Wild West, the authenticity of the Indigenous performers also depended on the depiction of a change in settlers' relationship with Indigenous peoples. This shift was part of the American progress/conquest narrative that the show highlighted by supporting "the fact that Native peoples were no longer a threat, that is, no longer a foe. The foe-to-friend discourse found in newspaper reports and other media related to the Wild West show signaled to the public the successful civilizing of Native peoples, as well as their changing relationship with the white settler community."[69] This narrative was not entirely false and was mirrored in Buffalo Bill's life. Buffalo Bill was born as William F. Cody in 1846 and traveled through the Americas in his teenage years as part of the gold rush and reportedly the Pony Express.[70] He worked as a scout for the Seventh Kansas Cavalry during the end of the American Civil war. It was in 1867 upon his work of hunting buffalo for the Kansas Pacific Railroad that he earned his name Buffalo Bill.[71] Within two years of this work he bragged that he had killed over four thousand buffalo, his high kill count starkly opposite of the carefully planned hunts of Indigenous peoples.[72] His life grabbed the attention of the public through dime store novels about his adventures and theater productions including *The Scouts of the Prairie* in 1872. While these both gained minimal attention in the press, the theater allowed Buffalo Bill to gain an audience that was enamoured with his charisma.[73] This period of his life was promoted through the U.S. Army as they recognized that he was a magnetic individual who could be a "public relations windfall" for the army who needed some positive publicity.[74] In 1876, Buffalo Bill was requested by the Fifth Cavalry to return as a scout for the conflicts with Indigenous peoples on the plains. It was in that work that Buffalo Bill, in a theatrical way, wore his stage clothing to kill and scalp a Cheyenne warrior named Yellow Hair.[75] Buffalo Bill created the Wild West show in 1883, a production that

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[69] Linda Scarangella McNenly, "Foe, Friend, or Critic: Native Performers with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and Discourses of Conquest and Friendship in Newspaper Reports," *American Indian Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2014): 147–48, https://doi.org/10.5250/amerindiquar.38.2.0143.
[70] "William F. Cody Directs Native American Riders from Buffalo Bill's Wild West :: MS 006 William F. Cody Photographs," 1886, MS 006 William F. Cody Collection, Buffalo Bill Centre of the West, http://cdm17097.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p17097coll43/id/860.
[71] "Buffalo Bill Biography," Buffalo Bill Center of the West, accessed May 25, 2023, https://centerofthewest.org/explore/buffalo-bill/research/buffalo-bill/.
[72] Deanne Stillman, *Blood Brothers: The Story of the Strange Friendship between Sitting Bull and Buffalo Bill*, First Edition (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017), 44.
[73] Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*, 25.
[74] "Buffalo Bill Biography."
[75] "Buffalo Bill Biography."

lasted over three decades and moved him from a man who proudly killed Indigenous peoples, to one who employed and even befriended them.

It appears that during his time on the Wild West show, Buffalo Bill's life mirrored the foe-to-friend narrative. Evidence shows that Buffalo Bill maintained respectful relationships with the Indigenous cast members, including Tatanka Iyotake who joined the show in 1886, someone he previously fought against.[76] Evidence exists that Buffalo Bill and Tatanka Iyotake formed a true friendship, garnering the headline "foes in '76, Friends in '85" a phrase used in photographs and the show programs.[77] Scarangella McNenly describes the foe-to-friend narrative as a modification of the vanishing Indian narrative, used to explain the fact that Indigenous peoples had yet to disappear, and to represent they were no longer a threat. Tatanka Iyotake's participation in the Wild West show especially revealed how Indigenous peoples were no longer a concern, as he was well known as the "killer of Custer."[78] The foe-to-friend narrative was promoted widely including interactions with the media. Further, Buffalo Bill as well as other show promoters, encouraged the idea that Indigenous peoples were educated about white society through their time with the show preparing them for assimilation into civilization.[79] Media reported on the education Indigenous peoples received in their travels with the show, observing that these participants were "put through the paces of civilization," arguing that the Indigenous peoples were becoming civilized by experiencing the white world.[80] Further, the media used the conflicting versions the Indigenous actors gave in the show— representing themselves as both savage warriors in the mock battles and also as friends who were becoming educated in civilization— to further the narrative that these former rebellious chiefs were now subdued and friends of civilization.[81] The Indigenous actors also promoted this narrative, in interviews they highlighted their friendships and peace with white society. Albeit Scarangella McNenly notes it is impossible to know if the news articles were accurate or an edited version of what they said.[82] For example Tatanka Iyotake told a reporter "they treated me very kindly… and when I return to

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[76] Stillman, *Blood Brothers*; Scarangella McNenly, "Foe, Friend, or Critic."
[77] Stillman, *Blood Brothers*, 117.
[78] Scarangella McNenly, "Foe, Friend, or Critic," 148.
[79] Scarangella McNenly, 152.
[80] Scarangella McNenly, 153.
[81] Scarangella McNenly, 155.
[82] Scarangella McNenly, 155.

my people I shall tell them all about our friends among the white men, and what I have seen…[A]s long as I am all right and my people are all right, I want to travel and see all I can."[83] The foe-to-friend narrative required Buffalo Bill to remain the true star of the show so the settler–Indigenous hierarchy remained intact as each performance ended with the Indigenous performers losing mock battles, maintaining the narrative of progress.[84] Further, it would be during this period there would be renewed interest in the idea of Indigenous masculinities informing American masculinities. While Barrett's work, mentioned earlier, focused on British interpretations of Gabriel Dumont's masculinity, similar themes were seen in the United States at the same period. Philip Deloria describes how the turn of the twentieth century saw concern building over the "modern American character" in male children as too effeminate in this post-frontier era. and one way to counter this was to instill a form of "Indian Americanness."[85] It would be in the era of these shows that renewed interest in North American Indigenous cultures would further fuel attendance to these types of shows and continue opportunities for Indigenous performers. Altogether, it appears that Indigenous peoples who chose to be employed by shows like the Wild West were aware of the narratives that surrounded their participation, and they were willing to work within those constraints, trading a version of their culture for economic and even at times political gains. The reasons why Indigenous peoples chose to perform at these exhibitions were complex, and Gabriel's decision to participate in similar ventures was not unusual, as he was a Métis man who was adapting to the circumstances at hand to fulfill his responsibilities to his community.

For Gabriel, the benefits of the Wild West show were likely attractive. Media reports about letters from Gabriel allow us to verify that he felt these were important reasons to accept the offer of employment. Gabriel wrote to a friend June 9th, 1886, from Philadelphia, "I arrived here from Fort Benton yesterday, and every one in the company have treated me like a gentleman and seem to like me. I have not much to do except sit around and to be introduced to the public. I was in the parade yesterday through the city on horseback, the first time I have ridden a horse for

[83] As quoted in Scarangella McNenly, 156.
[84] Scarangella McNenly, 152.
[85] Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (Yale University Press, 2022), 96, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2g5918z.

some time… Mr. Salsbury sent fifty dollars to my wife direct."[86] The report of the ease of work was reiterated by the Helena *Town and Country* on June 24th, 1886 "Gabriel Dumont, of Riel rebellion fame, is starring in the east with the 'Buffalo Bill' combination. He writes to a friend at Fort Benton that all he has to do is sit around and be gazed at by the public."[87] Charles Thompson's research tells that before he left Montana to join the show, Gabriel made arrangements that all his earnings were sent back to fund hunts to feed the Métis community he left behind.[88] While he was recovering physically, Buffalo Bill's Wild West show provided him with many economic advantages, even if it meant putting himself on display. Gabriel supplemented his Wild West show through participating in numerous activities, taking part in shooting demonstrations at parties with the elite, which alone could pay him enough to feed a family back home for a month.[89] Altogether it appears that the Wild West show was an excellent opportunity for Gabriel to create income through demonstrating some of his buffalo hunting skills and allowed him to continue to provide for his family and community.

Gabriel seems to have recognized the opportunity for employment these types of shows could provide for his community, so he attempted to mediate employment for other Métis people with the Wild West show, and even proposed creating his own show. In doing so, Gabriel used his own success to provide for his community, following the tenets of wahkootowin. Gabriel understood that many members of his community required means to support themselves. Local farmers were hesitant to hire Métis people after the Resistance, believing them to be troublemakers, despite rhetoric in the local media that countered this sentiment.[90] In June 1886, shortly after joining Buffalo Bill's show, Gabriel wrote that Mr. Salsbury, "may want some of my people, he will telegraph to you."[91] Gabriel's note on this potential employment so soon after joining the show demonstrates that he continued to seek ways to provide for the community,

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[86] "A Letter from Gabriel Dumont," *The River Press*, June 23, 1886
[87] "Town and Territory," *Helena Weekly Herald*, June 24, 1886.
[88] "Gabriel Dumont Story Relived," *Canadian Register*, July 2, 1976 as quoted in Thompson, *Red Sun*, 226.
[89] Thompson, 226.
[90] Thompson, 225.
[91] "A Letter from Gabriel Dumont," *The River Press*, June 23, 1886.

fulfilling his role as a Métis leader.[92] Those who were invited to join the show were interested in the work, likely because of Gabriel's involvement, as they trusted that this meant that it was a good choice for them. In addition, compared with other work available to Indigenous peoples in the United States at the time, shows like the Wild West paid substantially more. Gabriel argued that these Wild West extravaganzas could become a new livelihood for more Métis. He discussed this option with several people, Edmund Mallet, a Francophone-American elite, as well as Laurent-Oliver David, editor of *Le Bien public*, in Quebec.[93] By 1887, his communications with Edmund Mallet focused on the topic of finding someone to invest in the idea of a Métis run wild west show, "I wrote some time ago to France, to the Director of the Hippodrome of Paris… he declined my proposal for a long term commitment; I am therefore forced to look here for an associate donor, because this business requires a lot of money; if you could recommend someone to me I would be infinitely grateful."[94] He worked on the idea of the show for several years, word of Gabriel's plans for an exposition in Paris highlighting the Métis of the Northwest was reported on by papers in 1888.[95] It appeared that Gabriel saw the opportunity in people's interest of Indigenous peoples in the east and overseas, and how creating his own show could put more income in the hands of his community. While his own wild west show did not come to fruition, Gabriel's acceptance of the invitation to join Buffalo Bill resulted in Gabriel's gaining of income for not just himself but his community.

In exchange for this income, Gabriel allowed the show to portray him as the "noble savage." This imagery was contradictory, representing Indigenous peoples as both "backward, uncivilized, and savage" while also being epitomized as the noble children of Eden.[96] This imagery was promoted in media surrounding the Wild West show, emphasizing the romantic

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[92] Kim Anderson, Robert Alexander Innes, and John Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities: Carrying the Bones of the Ancestors." In *Canadian Men and Masculinities: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Wayne Martino and Christopher J. Greig (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2012), 266–84.
[93] Pierre Anctil, "Les Lettres de Gabriel Dumont Au Major Edmond Mallet," *Recherches Amerindiennes Au Québec* X, no. 1–2 (1980): 53–66.
[94] Translation mine. Gabriel Dumont, "Letter," December 1, 1887, R82-647, Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan.
[95] "Des Metis a Paris," *Echo de l'ouest*, December 27, 1888, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045239/1888-12-27/ed-1/seq-3/.
[96] Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*, 75.

noble character alongside "all the lurid glory of war paint."[97] Further, the promotional materials emphasized and 'studied' the differences between Indigenous peoples and white society, revealing the racial attitudes of the audience. The European audience, during the Wild West tours in France, saw the show as both entertainment and scientific opportunity, "members of the French Anthropological Society visited the show in 1889, measuring [Indigenous performers'] heads and examining their physiognomies, much as they had done in the early days of the human zoos at the Jardin d'Acclimatiation."[98] The reporters in Europe and America described what they viewed as the savage side of the performers, discussing "'blood-curdling yells', attacks by Indians, and 'wild' or 'primitive' dances, all which are said to be representative of 'the savage life and customs" of Indigenous peoples.[99] Additionally, the audience viewed the "Indians as wild and bloodthirsty, threatening and dangerous, but ultimately to be defeated by a swashbuckling epitome of American manhood, such as Buffalo Bill," [100] confirming the narrative of the conquering American dream over the disappearing 'noble savage.' Buffalo Bill held feasts to welcome Gabriel and advertising was used to promote his addition to the show. In no way was the show trying to counter the representations of Gabriel the press had previously created of the Métis leader. The Wild West show portrayed Gabriel with these same narratives, as a political outlaw "without fear and beyond reproach," emphasizing one aspect of his identity to feed into the audience's stereotypes.[101] As a Métis man, especially with the reputation he had gained during the Resistance, the audience expected Gabriel to be the stereotypical violent Indigenous man, and the Wild West show's promotions fed into this expectation.

The Wild West hired Indigenous leaders who had gained notoriety to support their claim of an authentic view into life in the West. Scarangella McNenly argues that the show had to do more than provide access to real people from the west to gain this authenticity. It did so by accessing "spectator position," promoting recognizable individuals who had not just lived in the west but were connected to important aspects or events of frontier history.[102] To do this, the Wild

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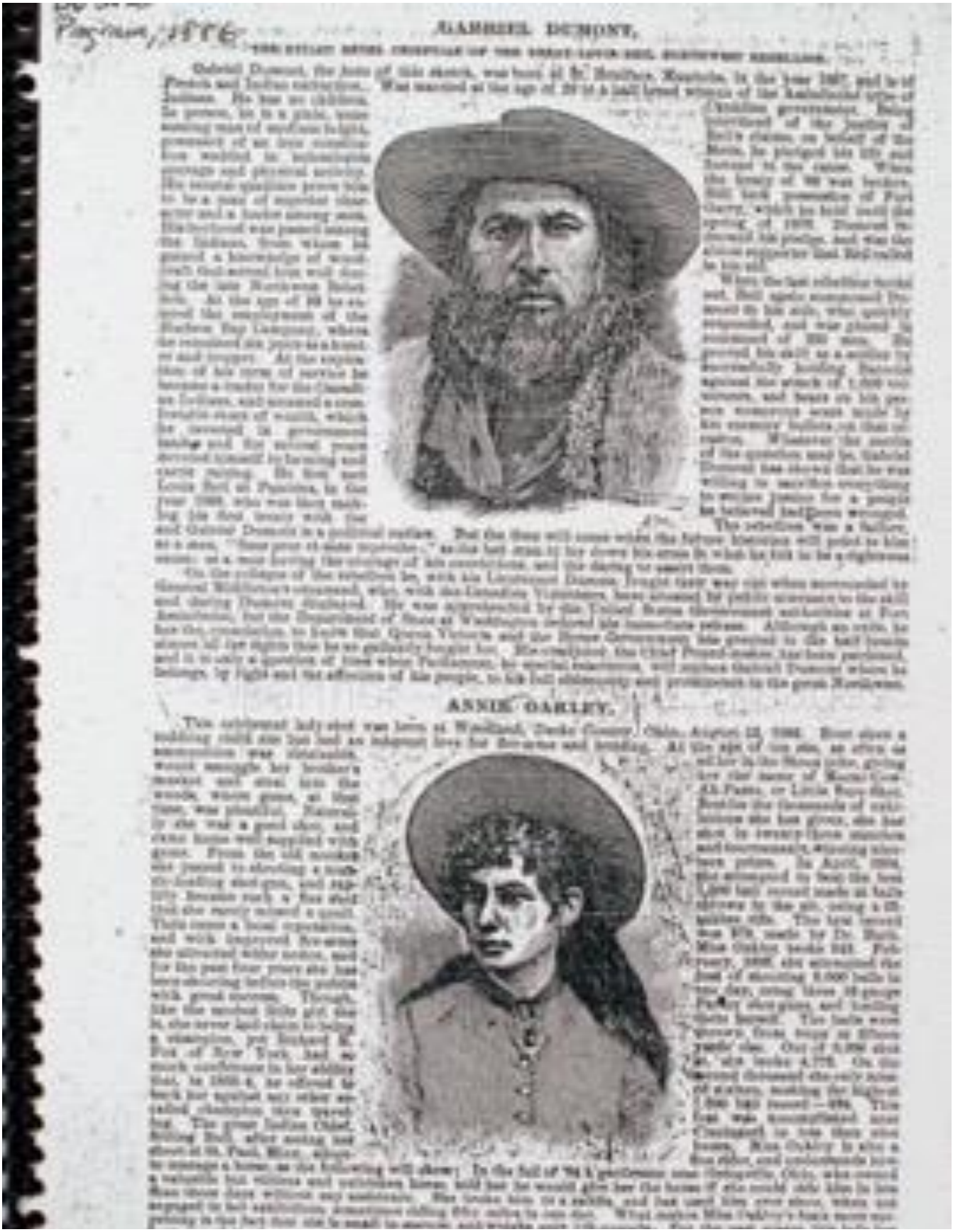
[97] Scarangella McNenly, 75.
[98] Datta, "Buffalo Bill Goes to France," 545–46.
[99] Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*,76.
[100] Hendry, Reclaiming Culture, 61.
[101] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 226.
[102] Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows*, 72.



GABRIEL DUMONT.

ANNIE OAKLEY.

Figure 27 Wild West show program 1886 Credit: Metis Museum Dennis and Jean Fisher Collection

ensured that the audience viewed the show as authentic owing to the involvement of well-known Indigenous performers. As such, the programs for the shows highlighted these 'name' actors' life stories to help add to the aura of authenticity. The show featured Gabriel in a half-page write-up alongside Annie Oakley, the famed female sharpshooter (see fig. 27). Here, Gabriel was portrayed as a fearless leader with a "constitution wedded to indomitable courage and physical activity. His mental qualities prove him to be a man of superior character and a leader among men."[103] The show depicted him as a man who fought for a "righteous cause and was the last to lay down his arms—the sign of a true leader."[104] Furthermore, Gabriel is illustrated in the show's program as successful in his battle for Métis rights, as "Queen Victoria and the Home Government has [sic] granted the half-breeds almost all the rights that he so gallantly fought for."[105] While this declaration was not accurate—it maintained the version of Gabriel the show wanted to portray—a successful Indigenous war hero, albeit one who was defeated in battle. This focus on his connection to the 1885 North West Resistance was important, because it positioned Gabriel as not just a Métis man, but a man with direct experience in an important historical event, lending to the authenticity of the show promoted to the audience.

The Wild West show provided Gabriel an opportunity to use the cultural capital he gained in the public eye to create economic opportunities to support his community and family. Gabriel traveled with the show for several months, reaching as far east as New York City where the show spent several months at Erastina, New York (Staten Island). Here approximately half of New York City attended the show and learned about Gabriel Dumont and the Métis. While Gabriel's role with the show was brief, it was an important step to his gaining access to potential political allies.

The Public Speaker

The Wild West show played an important role in giving Gabriel access to audiences to which he could advocate for the Métis, expanding on the advocacy he began immediately after the Resistance. Gabriel began highlighting the injustices the Métis faced at the hands of the Canadian government, taking advantage of the interest the public had in the Resistance as soon as

[103] "Wild West Show Program," 1886, Dennis and Jean Fisher Collection, Metis Museum / Gabriel Dumont Institute.
[104] "Wild West Show Program."
[105] "Wild West Show Program."

he crossed the border. For instance, upon reaching Montana in 1885, Gabriel and Michel (who had fled south with Gabriel after the Resistance) were interviewed by the local Fort Benton newspaper, *The River Press*. The paper announced that the two men had travelled five hundred miles in eighteen days and interviewed them about the Resistance and their escape to the United States.[106] For Gabriel, the interview was a useful platform to counter colonial narratives of the Resistance and gain additional support for the Métis, and this first interview demonstrates that Gabriel and Michel were perhaps being strategic in their use of the press.

While Gabriel and Michel had spoken briefly to the press before, this was the first in-depth interview, and it reveals some of the ways Gabriel used the media to his benefit. Interestingly, the interview was conducted in English, a language that Gabriel supposedly could not speak well. He spoke in French to the Francophone groups, indicating that he tailored his delivery to his audience.[107] In fact, it became a well-known aspect of Gabriel's reputation that he was illiterate and spoke several Indigenous languages and French.[108] However, that was not accurate. John Kerr, who lived with Gabriel for several years, wrote an article in 1935 to counter some of these false beliefs, "Gabriel Dumont was not an ignorant Métis, as a certain magazine writer asserts. Far from it. He knew many different [Indigenous] dialects, and spoke Cree (his mother's tongue) with great facility. He had a remarkable memory, and could read and write in French; so could his brothers Eli— who was killed at Duck Lake— and Edouard."[109] Since Gabriel held this interview in English, it can be deduced that he was able to speak the language well enough to provide detailed information to the journalist, and perhaps the settler audiences of the east understood him as illiterate and speaking mostly Indigenous languages because that was the version of himself he presented. Gabriel was savvy enough of a speaker to recognize the expectations of his audience, including reporters.

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[106] "Dumont and Dumais," *The River Press*, June 10, 1885, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85053157/1885-06-10/ed-1/seq-3/.
[107] "Dumont and Dumais."
[108] Gaudry notes that Gabriel could only speak a few words of English but this interview in English shows he likely had a better command of the language than his reputation portrayed. Adam Gaudry, "Gabriel Dumont," The Canadian Encyclopedia, accessed February 22, 2016, http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/dumont-gabriel/.
[109] John Andrew Kerr, "Gabriel Dumont: A Personal Memory," *Dalhousie Review* 15 (36 1935): 54.

Indigenous leaders' use of newspaper journalism to their advantage has a long history. For example, Keith Carlson writes about Chief Capilano's clever use of journalism in relation to the 1906 trip to London to give a petition to the King. Carlson argues that Capilano used the press "to build momentum prior to embarking for London, Capilano teased the Canadian third and fourth estates."[110] Capilano was successful in stoking the journalists' interest by refusing to provide them with information and the media responded by giving even more attention to the mission.[111] Capilano also shifted his approach, when the group arrived in Ottawa he changed from being coy to being frank, engaging in a "risky game of cat and mouse with Canadian politicians and newspaper reporters."[112] Chief Capilano continued to interact with the press in London, England, Carlson notes that the attention was a double edged sword as while the press remained interested in the political mission, the delegation began to be more of an entertainment piece than serious news. Capilano appeared to recognize this and strategically used humour to lean into stereotypes to keep the press's attention.[113] As Carlson shows, Indigenous leaders were aware of the power of the press in this period, and likely used the press as much as the newspapers used them, and evidence shows Gabriel made use of the reporters to advocate for the Métis.

Gabriel and Michel's interview demonstrated the public interest and support the Métis were already receiving in the United States. The newspaper published a letter of support alongside the interview. The letter was signed "fifty or more sympathizers from Fort Assiniboine" and called for others in the area to support the Métis, because "they have been driven from their homes and families are penniless… and [the supporters] hope that the people of Fort Benton and elsewhere will do the same in helping them provide for their distanced families."[114] The newspaper's publication of the letter does not state who the supporters were, however, there were Métis settlements in the area.[115] While the Resistance may have been over,

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[110] Keith Thor Carlson, "Rethinking Dialogue and History: The King's Promise and the 1906 Aboriginal Delegation to London," *Native Studies Review* 16, no. 2 (December 2005): 13.
[111] Carlson, 13.
[112] Carlson, 13.
[113] Carlson, 15.
[114] "Dumont and Dumais."
[115] Martha Harroun Foster, *We Know Who We Are: Métis Identity in a Montana Community* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006); Foster, "Spring Creek (Lewiston) Montana,"

Gabriel's advocacy for Métis rights was not. The interview and letter showed him that there was interest in the plight of the Métis people and Gabriel began to make inroads with the Francophone communities shortly after arriving in the United States.

Francophone communities in the United States identified with the plight of the Métis, which Louis Riel had fought for over a decade earlier. Louis Riel used his established relationships to leverage the nineteenth-century political climate in Eastern Canada and promote the Métis agenda. Riel positioned the Métis to the Franco-American and Franco-Canadiens as two parts of the same, the "French Canadian Métis of the north are a branch of the French Canadian tree" claiming the existence of shared interests of both groups.[116] Max Hamon's biography on Louis Riel spends considerable attention on his use of social networks to argue for political amnesty for the Métis involved with the Red River Resistance of 1869-70. Hamon argues that Louis Riel understood and influenced the broader political systems in Canada by garnering support from Francophone allies.[117] Hamon positions this work as "labour intensive, but the social capital that it produced was formidable… Enabling and extending the reach of politicians like Riel, Confederation provided new forms of social capital that could be used to advance the interests of specific communities and their interests."[118] Thus, like Louis Riel, Gabriel worked to develop a relationship with the Francophone communities as Métis allies.

It was the right time to ask the Francophone communities on both sides of the border for support. During this period, the political climate in Canada was heated, as Anglophone and Francophone politicians struggled with conflicting notions of Canada. The result was that Francophone communities in Canada and the United States were invested in the plight of the Métis, as they viewed it as an extension of the broader political struggle of the Canadian Francophone community.[119] The American Francophone communities were founded by families

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The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture, http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/14628.

[116] Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise*, 257–58.

[117] Hamon, chaps. 10–13.

[118] Hamon, 267.

[119] Diane P. Payment, *The Free People - Li Gens Libres: A History of the Métis Community of Batoche, Saskatchewan* (UCP: University of Calgary Press, 2009),161–72.

that emigrated from Canada in the mid-nineteenth century.[120] Many of these communities had moved south because they could no longer afford to live on their income in Québec, a similar struggle many Métis families faced with the end of the buffalo hunt.[121] Between 1865 and 1930 over one million French-Canadiens immigrated to the United States, most settling into the New England region.[122] In the United States, these groups created "little Canadas" in the cities in which they settled, continuing their culture and connections to Canada.[123] They established parishes where both church and schools promoted French-Canadian culture, creating ethnic enclaves that countered American assimilationist policies.[124] Thus, while American Francophone communities were not Canadian in residency, they were still well-connected to Canadian politics and events, "even if the French Canadian leaves his bones here [United States of America] his thoughts all lie beyond the Canadian border."[125] Furthermore, French-Canadian politicians viewed Canadian Conservatives and Sir John A. Macdonald's handling of the 1885 Resistance as a major political gaffe, making them sympathetic to the Métis cause, if only to further undercut the Conservatives' power. Thus, while Gabriel may not have been aware of all these shifting political elements, he recognized that the Francophone communities were interested in the Métis cause and worked to develop these political connections.

By all accounts, Gabriel connected well with the Francophone communities. Recognizing that meeting the audience's expectations was best, he highlighted certain periods and events in his life to fulfill the audience's imagined version of him to garner their interest and support. Gabriel believed that if the Francophone communities were sympathetic to the Métis they became allies and support them politically.[126] And they did. In August 1885, the French Canadians of New York gifted Gabriel a 14-karat gold hunting pocket watch, and in October 1886, they

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[120] Pierre Anctil and Yves Frenette, "Franco-Americans," The Canadian Encyclopedia, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/franco-americans.
[121] Anctil and Frenette.
[122] Mary MacKinnon and Daniel Parent, "Resisting the Melting Pot: The Long Term Impact of Maintaining Identity for Franco-Americans in New England," *Explorations in Economic History* 49, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 31, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eeh.2011.09.004.
[123] Anctil and Frenette, "Franco-Americans."
[124] MacKinnon and Parent, "Resisting the Melting Pot," 31–32.
[125] MacKinnon and Parent, 31.
[126] Fred White, "Communications from Fred White," May 12, 1888, Edgar Dewdney Fonds M-320, Glenbow Archives.

presented him with a medal "to show that the people of Dumont's race up-hold him in the principles for which he so valiantly struggled."[127] The medal itself was inscribed with "Patria et justitia," (country and justice) and an image of Gabriel protecting a woman (said to represent Lady Justice), while the reverse bore the inscription "hommage a Gabriel Dumont" (tribute to Gabriel Dumont).[128] The medal included four bars, three of which were inscribed with each of the battles of the North West Resistance, and the fourth with a rising sun, symbolizing the "advance of the Métis race."[129] In this period military medals often contained bars denoting the battle the wearer had participated in, so much so that one was ashamed to wear a medal without a bar attached(see fig. 28).[130] It was presented with great ceremony to Gabriel, illustrating his importance to the Francophone community.[131] The medal itself contained many messages of how the Francophone people viewed the Métis and their actions in the Resistance. The Francophones' memorialization of the battles on the medal indicates that the group viewed the battles against the British/Canadian governments as valorous and believed that it defended French rights as well.[132] It could also be interpreted that the medal represented a recognition of a nation-to-nation relationship. For example, in 1783 Benjamin Franklin's *Librates Americana*, was a medal gifted to France to commemorate the United States of America becoming part of a community of nations and France's support during the War of Independence.[133] L.C. Olson argues that the medal contained many rhetorical messages, that for the Liberates the medal depicted "courage,

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[127] "Dumont to Have a Medal," *The River Press*, October 13, 1886, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85053157/1886-10-13/ed-1/seq-5/; "Dumont Presented with a Medal," *The Livingston Enterprise*, October 16, 1886, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86075261/1886-10-16/ed-1/seq-1/.
[128] "Dumont to Have a Medal"; "Honoring Gabriel Dumont," *The New York Times*, October 5, 1886, New York Times; Thompson, *Red Sun*, 228.
[129] "Honoring Gabriel Dumont."
[130] Matthew Richardson, "Medals, Memory and Meaning: Symbolism and Cultural Significance of Great War Medals," in *Contested Objects: Material Memories of the Great War*, ed. Paul Cornish and Nicholas J. Saunders (London: Routledge, 2009), 104–9, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203873854.
[131] "Honoring Gabriel Dumont."
[132] Louis Riel fought for the protection of the French language in the events surrounding the signing of the Manitoba Act. Adam Gaudry, "Kaa-Tipeyimishoyaahk – 'We Are Those Who Own Ourselves': A Political History of Métis Self-Determination in the North-West, 1830–1870" (Dissertation, Victoria, University of Victoria, 2014); Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise*.
[133] L.C. Olson, "Benjamin Franklin's Commemorative Medal Libertas Americana: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 76, no. 1 (January 1, 1990): 23–45, https://doi.org/10.1080/00335639009383898.

Figure 28 Gabriel Dumont, approx. age fifty, with both medals and watch credit: Prince Albert Historical Society

military skill and youthful potential for greatness; for France, the medal portrayed generosity, loyalty to an ally and benign concern for an emerging nation."[134] Medals were also presented to the Canadian veterans who participated in the battles of the 1885 Resistance, becoming an

[134] Olson, 24.

important symbol of their participation.[135] As such, a medal contains important messages that are interpreted differently by the giver and the audience. In this tradition of medal gifting, the medal gifted to Gabriel represented the relationship the Francophone community saw with Gabriel and the Métis.

The Francophone community's positioning of Gabriel as a military hero was further demonstrated by the pomp and circumstance of the presentation. The Gardes Lafayette were at the ceremony in uniform and their band played in a hall decorated with French and American flags.[136] The Gardes Lafayette were a volunteer company, who— as with other volunteer companies in this period— were developed to provide social and physical opportunities for American youth and were independent of state control.[137] The Gardes were well invested in the pomp and circumstance surrounding soirées, with public and private benefactors helping fund the members' distinctive uniforms.[138] The Gardes Lafayette wore "blue frock coat with red cuffs, collars and shoulder knots, red cloth caps and pantaloons. To complete the picture each man nursed a moustache and goatee and carried a short sword 'imported from France.'"[139] The atmosphere was one of celebration of French culture and identity. Altogether, the ceremony was to celebrate a military hero and Gabriel told stories of the Resistance tailored to his audience. He spoke about the poor behaviour of the British troops, and how he truly believed that with more men he could have held them off for months.[140] A week later, he told similar stories to the Francophone community in Chicago, where they awarded him a similar medal.[141] Gabriel continued to wear both medals proudly at his speaking engagements, a signal to other Francophone groups of his status as a hero within that sphere.

Gabriel's strategy of discussing subjects that appealed to his audiences was successful, as it garnered him continued attention from the Francophone communities and newspapers. The

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[135] Matthew McRae, "Remembering Rebellion, Remembering Resistance: Collective Memory, Identity, and the Veterans of 1869-70 and 1885" (Ph.D., University of Western Ontario, 2018): 176-233, https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/5299.
[136] "Honoring Gabriel Dumont."
[137] Theodore G. Gronert, "The First National Pastime in the Middle West," *Indiana Magazine of History* 29, no. 3 (1933): 172.
[138] Gronert, 175.
[139] Gronert, 176.
[140] "Honoring Gabriel Dumont."
[141] "Dumont to Have a Medal."

newspaper coverage of his travels provides a record of some of the topics he discussed and his success as an orator. Clement Williams explores Indigenous oratory in North America and determines that a successful orator does not need to be artistic in language but must be efficient, practicality over aesthetics, and have the ability to persuade their audience to accept their suggestions.[142] Williams suggests that the second aspect of recognizing if a speaker is efficient in their oratory skills is if they gain a reputation and become "a person of stature, one to be reckoned with in the community."[143] Most importantly Williams connects successful oratory to successful leadership in Indigenous North America, noting that a leader might gain attention for their actions, but it was their ability to be a "man of words" in addition to a "man of action" that was necessary to create consensus within their communities and be an effective leader.[144] With that framework, it is not a surprise that Gabriel with his lifelong history of leadership was successful in his speaking engagements to the Francophone communities. For instance, in April 1887, the *St. Paul Daily Globe* reported that Gabriel's discussion focused primarily on Louis Riel.[145] Gabriel likely concentrated on Louis Riel, because as discussed earlier, the French-American citizens had supported Louis Riel.[146] The French and Catholic citizens in these American cities identified with Louis Riel and how he had not only fought for Métis rights but also for protection of the French language and Catholicism.[147] Moreover, the political climate in Canada was shifting after Louis Riel's execution in November 1885, and the French Canadians (including those who had moved to the United States) moved to "appeal to the race," which meant to promote French culture, and they saw the Métis as French, and this made them supportive of the Métis cause.[148] Gabriel shared how he had spent four days searching for Louis Riel after the Resistance and that he had cautioned him not to believe promises of a fair trial, because of the duplicity of the Canadian (British) Government. Gabriel provided detailed reports

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[142] William M. Clements, *Oratory in Native North America* (University of Arizona Press, 2022), 121, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2pwtmff.
[143] Clements, 121.
[144] Clements, 120.
[145] Of course, one should be careful not to assume that the reports cover all topics Gabriel had discussed. However, the fact that the reporter felt that it was important to highlight these aspects illustrates their importance to the Francophone community.
[146] Hamon discusses these relationships and support for Louis from the Francophone community in both Canada and the United States. Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise*.
[147] Payment, *The Free People*, 161–72.
[148] Anctil and Frenette, "Franco-Americans."

of the events of the four battles of the Resistance, emphasizing Louis Riel's role in the Resistance as much as his own.[149] Gabriel successfully spoke to these crowds as he capitalised on the political interests of these Francophone communities and likely understood that it was not his Métis identity they were interested in, but rather that they viewed the Métis as compatriots and defenders of French culture. In doing so he successfully positioned Louis Riel as a main topic and promoted specific aspects of his culture to gain political and economic support from the crowds.

While speaking to Francophone groups in the United States was effective in gathering support for the Métis, Gabriel likely knew that he needed to travel to Canada to speak directly to voters and those with power in the Canadian Government, but he wanted to be sure that it was safe to do so. Gabriel needed to know that he would not be arrested. The guarantee of amnesty had been a difficult topic, as being informed of amnesty and gaining proof were two separate concerns. For example, Buffalo Bill informed Gabriel that he had been granted amnesty by the Canadian Government in July of 1886, when the show was performing on Staten Island.[150] Papers reported that "Buffalo Bill and his partner, Nate Salisbury, together with General Manager Burke, as soon as the news was received proceeded at once to Dumont's tent, and shaking his hand sincerely congratulated him. The soldier was visibly affected. Tears coursed down his cheeks, and he seemed for a time completely unmanned."[151] However, while Gabriel had also often snuck into Canada, under the government's nose[152] he was hesitant to believe the word of the Canadian government without written proof. Gabriel was right to be cautious, as he attempted, but failed, to obtain confirmation that the 1886 pardons included him. The federal government's actions in 1887 indicate that Gabriel was correct in not believing that the reported amnesty applied to him. For example, in 1887, the House of Commons debated amnesty for Gabriel, a sign that the 1886 pardons did not include Gabriel.[153] Thus, it was not until he had

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[149] "Gabriel Dumont Addresses French Citizens – Umbrella Fiends – Typographical Election," *St. Paul Daily Globe*, April 4, 1887.
[150] "Dumont in New York Buffalo Bill Manages to Get Some Free Advertising."
[151] "Dumont in New York Buffalo Bill Manages to Get Some Free Advertising," *The River Press*, August 4, 1886, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85053157/1886-08-04/ed-1/seq-1/.
[152] "Gabriel Dumont at the Champ de Mars assembly," *Echo de l'ouest*, December 2, 1885, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045239/1885-12-02/ed-1/seq-3/.
[153] Thompson, *Red Sun*, 230.

finally received written confirmation of his pardon in 1888, and with the support of several influential Canadian friends he had made during his time in New York, including Premier Honoré Mercier, Raymond Préfontaine, and Laurent-Olivier David (editor of *Le Bien Public),*[154] that he felt confident that he could be seen publicly and not be arrested.[155] It was at this time that Gabriel arranged to travel to Québec to speak to the influential figures and Francophone groups to continue his advocacy for Métis rights.

Gabriel saw in person advocacy as an essential tool and more efficient than petitions sent from the northwest. After his pardon, he wrote to the Métis in Batoche with an update on why he thought he should remain in the east. In February 1888, he relayed the advancements he had made on behalf of the Métis through his speaking tours, including meeting with Honoré Mercier, the First Ministre of Québec. Mercier was becoming an influential politician; as the first political leader to assert that Québec was a nation, he was known as the father of Québec nationalism. In addition, when several conservative and liberal politicians were dissatisfied with how the Canadian Government had handled the conflict with the Métis in 1885, Mercier used these divisions to gain the seat as premier of Québec through his promotion of Québec sentimentality regarding Louis Riel's execution.[156] As such, he was an important ally for Gabriel and the Métis as he was sympathetic to the Métis cause and held significant political influence in Québec and federally.[157] Diane Payment discusses how the Métis back in Batoche, many of whom had changed their political leanings from Conservative to Liberal, had been in contact with Mercier and the Quebec Nationalists and the support they received.[158] For example, at an assembly in Batoche, Philippe Garnot motioned to send a letter "to one of his friends in Lower Canada to thank the liberals who had managed to get him and his comrades released from prison."[159] The community also continued to send petitions through the late 1880s, at times working with the

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[154] Thompson, 233.
[155] "Chief of the Métis, the Hero of Batoche in Montreal, What the Veteran Leader Said to a 'Herald Reporter,'" *The Montreal Daily Herald*, April 1, 1888; White, "Communications from Fred White."
[156] Daniel Latouche, "Honoré Mercier," The Canadian Encyclopedia, October 20, 2014, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/honore-mercier; "Gabriel Dumont at the Champ de Mars assembly."
[157] Latouche, "Honoré Mercier."
[158] Payment, *The Free People*, 148.
[159] Payment, 148.

political situation of the region to their advantage.[160] However, overall the petitions from Batoche and St. Laurent saw little success with the "government's response show[ing] little sensitivity to the harsh circumstances of the Métis."[161] In 1888 a mostly liberal group of Métis directed petitions to liberal Wilfrid Laurier, setting out a list of grievances including "recognition of the Aboriginal rights of the Métis people, the granting of titles to their lands, and an impartial adjudication of claims for losses suffered during the 1885 Resistance."[162] Members in Batoche, including Alexandre Fisher kept Gabriel apprised of their actions and the petitions sent and the divisions that were occurring within the community.[163] It was with that knowledge that Gabriel wrote to the Métis in Batoche:

> Delayed sending news relative to what I have done to obtain our rights for several reasons – first that I had with not to aid me two persons in whom I had confidence, but, I regret to say, they have been unable to obtain anything. This was before my last voyage to Montana— when I returned I was aided in the work by Riboulet, and this time we have been more successful and you will be able to judge by the enclosed papers. We read in the newspapers that petitions have been sent from Batoche to the Government—he thought and we have believed that these petitions were contrary to our interests, and probably it would be better to allow the one on our side to be worked up. It is for that reason we suggest the idea of calling a meeting to consult you, and read the documents which we address you and if you all think we have worked well and have merited your confidence, you will let us know, and we hope that with the aid of God we will obtain our rights. We have already obtained a first result the amnesty proclamation for all of us, which I have in my hands, and we are assured it has not the cooperation of all, it has to say the least the moral support of high personages of Canada—this much—no have worked to gain the sympathy of the French and we have succeeded—for although not yet having been in France, we have there are exalted person who is interesting himself in, and sympathizes with our cause. Here now is what we call our rights,

[160] Payment, 148.
[161] Payment, 148.
[162] Payment, 151.
[163] Payment, 152.

> and what we are desirous of obtaining from the Government. 1st, indemnity for the losses which we suffered during and after our outbreak in the North West in 1885, that is to say an indemnity such as has been accorded to those had not the courage to take part in the rising. 2nd Scrip for those whom all have so long petitioned. Will you let us know if the majority of the meeting approve us and we will continue to work with more courage.[164]

Gabriel did not believe that Métis petitions alone could be unsuccessful, which the events of 1885 proved was likely. And, while Gabriel thought he and his allies in the east had a better chance of success, he wanted the approval of the Métis community. In doing so Gabriel maintained Métis leadership practices, while he represented his community and was given authority to speak on their behalf—he was not the absolute authority on what was best for the community. The work of the Métis was directly connected to the work of Gabriel and influenced the way he approached his speaking engagements and with whom he aimed to make connections with.

In 1888 in Montreal, Gabriel mirrored the approaches he took in the United States, speaking to Francophone groups and granting interviews to reporters. Gabriel declared to one Montreal reporter in April that his plan was to go "through the province of Quebec and address public meetings, telling his compatriots why his people had taken up arms to right their wrongs and why Riel had acted the part, which ended only on the scaffold in Regina."[165] Here, Gabriel was astute. By calling the French Canadians "compatriots," he aligned them directly with the Métis and continued to appeal to those who had supported the Métis. Gabriel's aligning the Métis with these groups appears to have been successful as the paper reported that the "Rielites" (Riel supporters) were "most anxious for the famous chieftains' company, and that they are loud in praising and congratulating him" as he spoke to expose "the facts of what he claims to be their true light."[166] Gabriel was again interacting with the reporters, using the media to his advantage to gather attention to his goals.

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[164] White, "Communications from Fred White."
[165] "Chief of the Métis, the Hero of Batoche in Montreal, What the Veteran Leader Said to a 'Herald Reporter.'"
[166] "The Métis General. Gabriel Dumont Returns from Exile – Lecturing and Electioneering, But No More Fighting for Him.," *The Montreal Daily Witness*, April 16, 1888.

Gabriel continued to strategically employ similar themes in his speeches, but also, he was more outspoken about his political opinions. Quebec's Premier, liberal Honoré Mercier had used the 1885 North West Resistance and the execution of Louis Riel to use French-Canadian racial sympathies to join with conservative Charles Alphonse Pelletier to win the election in 1886.[167] Within this political context, Gabriel positioned himself against the Conservative, British-influenced, Dominion Government by blaming them for the outcome of the 1885 North West Resistance, aligning himself directly with the political leanings of his audience. In April of 1888, Gabriel publicly accused the federal government of the violence at Duck Lake, as they had fired the first shot. The Métis wanted to avoid violence in that meeting, and Gabriel "thought that [the mounted police and agent] had come to take away the papers and authority of the North-West Council. Mackay threatened to shoot Dumont and he pointed his gun at him. Dumont tried to take the gun away, and in the struggle it exploded, the bullet going in the air. The Police then fired on the Métis and the rebellion followed."[168] While this statement was not surprising, it played into Québec's anti-loyalist sentiments and perhaps did not accurately reflect the true motivations of the Métis taking up guns if necessary.[169] Situating the first violence as not Métis caused is important, it reminded the audience that the Métis were civilized and seeking rights not war, and frames the Canadian military as the aggressor, appealing to the audience's opinion of the federal government.

Gabriel continued to appeal to the political tensions in Québec by showing the Métis concern about the Orange Order. Gabriel told reporters that Louis Riel had invited the First Nations to participate in the Resistance, because "he feared that the Orangemen would make them take part against the Métis. It was through fear of the Orangemen that the [First Nations] had been engaged in the struggle."[170] These statements aligned the plight of the Métis with the political position of many French-Canadian politicians, as the Orangemen were loyalists who

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[167] Thomas Blair Browning, "Mercier, Honoré," in *Dictionary of National Biography*, n.d., Wikisource.
[168] "Chief of the Métis, the Hero of Batoche in Montreal, What the Veteran Leader Said to a 'Herald Reporter.'"
[169] As discussed in the previous chapter, many of the younger Métis voiced their desire to take up arms. However, there is no evidence that the Métis went to this interaction with violent intentions, as Louis Riel continued to advocate peace.
[170] "Chief of the Métis, the Hero of Batoche in Montreal, What the Veteran Leader Said to a 'Herald Reporter.'"

violently rejected Francophone culture, including Catholicism.[171] The Orange Order in Canada "regarded themselves as respectable upholders of civil and religious liberty, and loyal defenders of the Protestant Crown and Empire against the machinations of Rome. Its detractors viewed them as a bunch of bigots who brought Old World sectarian violence on Canadian streets, who attempted to shut out Catholics from jobs at every opportunity, and who were a divisive and disruptive force in Canadian life."[172] The Orangemen had close links with conservative politicians and argued that French Catholics were disloyal to the Empire and Canada.[173] As such, Gabriel's mentioning of the threat of the Orangemen helped appeal to his audience who understood the concerns the Métis had about the Orangemen. The Orange Order had been involved in the 1869-70 Red River conflict, Thomas Scott being the only death connected to the events after he was found guilty and executed by the Provisional government. Scott had been clear in his position against the inclusion of Catholicism and French in the Manitoba Act, and had made threats against Louis Riel's life.[174] With this context, the concern of Louis Riel and the Batoche Exovedate about the Orange Order was valid, and by mentioning this concern, in which his audience and the Métis were politically aligned, Gabriel not only gained the sympathy of the Francophone community, he also provided valuable reasons for political alliance against the Conservative Government.

Gabriel continued to capitalise on the tensions in Canadian politics by aligning himself with the Québec and national Liberals. In May of 1888, Gabriel commented to a reporter that the Métis and First Nations in Batoche remained ill-treated by the federal government. However, he did not blame the government, but rather its agents who "were not faithful to their trust."[175] He had faith that Wilfrid Laurier, a Francophone politician and leader of the National Liberal Party who "had charge of the petition to the government," would do right by the Métis.[176] Wilfred Laurier had been a staunch supporter of Louis Riel and the Métis, so Gabriel's trust in him was

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[171] Michael Wilcox, "Orange Order in Canada," The Canadian Encyclopedia, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/orange-order.
[172] David A. Wilson, ed., *The Orange Order in Canada*, Ulster and Scotland (Dublin, Ireland: Four Courts Press, 2007), 10.
[173] Wilson, 15–19.
[174] Wilcox, "Orange Order in Canada."
[175] "Gabriel Dumont in Montreal," *Daily Colonist*, May 11, 1888.
[176] "Gabriel Dumont in Montreal."

understandable, as well it aligned his comments with the sentiment of the Métis in Batoche.[177] What is important here is that Gabriel did not paint the Métis as anti-government nor anti-Canadian; rather, he opposed the Conservative's actions but not all politicians. This approach was successful; the Québec nationalists sympathized with the Métis and provided Gabriel with a large audience and financial support during his tour that year, Honoré Mercier giving Gabriel $50 to support the Métis cause.[178] The tactic also highlighted Gabriel's portrayal of himself as a Métis man and leader to these colonial officials. He demonstrated his understanding of colonial politics and did not push against the patriarchal gender-role assumptions these politicians had of him. His access to these political realms was dependent on the fact that he aligned with their understanding of who military leaders should be.[179] Gabriel was careful about which groups he talked to, who he aligned himself and the Métis with politically, and how critical he was of the Canadian Government, so that his time in Québec could leverage the political context to the advantage of the Métis.

Gabriel was successful in making connections in Montréal, and had several opportunities to remain there, all of which he refused. His speaking engagements were successful as they were making him a person well known within the Montreal public, a "person of stature" allowing him to "gain prestige and political power."[180] In fact, in August 1888, Gabriel had gained such a reputation of stature in Montreal that a rich woman proposed marriage to Gabriel, and he was encouraged by his Montréal supporters to accept this offer. However, Gabriel declined, as

> he had given himself to his people and intended to return to the Northwest in a short time. He knows that one who would unite her fortunes to his would not care to follow him there. On the other hand he would not live in Montreal as he could not be true to the promise he made his people when they appointed him their leader; to dwell in their midst hereafter and see they were treated as a nation.[181]

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[177] Réal Bélanger, "Sir Wilfrid Laurier," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2021, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/sir-wilfrid-laurier.
[178] Jean Teillet, *The North-West Is Our Mother*, 357; "Gabriel Dumont in Montreal."
[179] Hokowhitu, "Producing Elite Indigenous Masculinities."
[180] Clements, *Oratory in Native North America*, 121.
[181] "Dumont Declines the Hand of a Rich Widow," *The Daily Colonist*, August 31, 1888.

This response confirmed that Gabriel was in Montréal to advocate for his people and returned to the North-West when he felt he had done all he could on their behalf, fulfilling his kinship and leadership responsibilities. But also it demonstrates the level of fame Gabriel had reached in the media and his ability to use the newspapers to his advantage, turning a salacious gossip feature into a reminder of the rights the Métis sought.

Overall, historical records indicate that Gabriel's return to the North-West in 1889 did not end his advocacy for the Métis people, but he did step out of the spotlight. While his return to the South Saskatchewan River area afforded him a quiet life, and he could spend time with family, visit friends, and hunt, he continued to be active in Métis politics and often travelled to both Ottawa and Montréal. Gabriel travelled quite a bit in the years after his return to the Saskatchewan Valley, so much so that in 1889 reported that Gabriel was still trying to organize a group of Métis to travel to Paris.[182] The question of whether Gabriel went to Paris or not is still a mystery many wish to solve, but these reports demonstrate his continued work to provide for his people. For instance, family stories tell that Gabriel advocated for the protection of wildlife but was not eager to talk about the Resistance at home.[183] Gabriel continued to tell his story to sympathizers, and one such event resulted in another transcription of his speeches. This memoir was substantially longer than the previous publication that focused only on the events surrounding the Resistance. Originally held by the L'Union nationale métisse de Saint-Joseph, and then transferred to its current home at the Centre du patrimoine in Saint-Boniface, Manitoba, it is believed that these speeches were transcribed between 1902 and 1903 by someone who was fluent in both French and Michif, and it is evidence that Gabriel continued his role as a speaker.[184] The memoir appears to be expanded from the narratives he told in Montréal, as Gabriel added more details about his life leading up to the Resistance than had been recorded from his other speaking engagements. This shift was likely on account of the audience, and while it is not known to whom he was speaking, it was during these years that renewed Métis activism

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[182] "Only Fear Fraud," *The Helena Independent*, September 30, 1889; "Dumont in Montana," *The Saint Paul Daily Globe*, May 16, 1889.
[183] Curtis DuMont, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 10, 2020; Elie Dumont, Interview, July 17, 1973, Metis Museum / Gabriel Dumont Institute, http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/01123.
[184] Dumont, *mémoires*.

occurred in Red River, such as the formation of the L'Union nationale métisse.[185] Perhaps he revealed more stories of his past because he was eager to relay them to a new captive audience.

CONCLUSION

Gabriel's time in the east uncovers details on the unique position he found himself in, and how with the support of his community, used the situation to the advantage of the Métis. The events of the 1885 North West Resistance rocketed Gabriel into the spotlight, alongside Louis Riel. The attention of the papers, based on his position as the military leader during the Resistance, allowed him to become the face of the Métis to American and Canadian audiences. Moreover, Canadian politics were shifting and the Francophone communities in both Canada and the United States were potentially powerful allies for the Métis. Furthermore, Victorian society was greatly interested in the idea of the West and sought opportunities to view representations of frontier life before it disappeared to progress. These factors all combined to provide Gabriel with unique opportunities in which he could trade his cultural capital for economic and political capital. Gabriel was able to do this in many ways because of his gender, his masculinity allowing him the type of cultural capital that his audience was interested in and allowed him into political spaces women were primarily excluded from. In doing so, he became an embodiment of the Métis resistance and the Métis for the audience. Although Gabriel placed himself in the spotlight, his motivation can be interpreted as being rooted in wahkootowin, his objective was to support and provide for his community.

This chapter has covered three years of Métis activism that are less well known than the events of the Resistance. I have countered the colonial narratives of Gabriel and the notion that the Métis were defeated when the Resistance ended. As illustrated, neither of these things are true. Gabriel continued to be a leader, representative, and provider for his community. However, he did not act alone. Instead, he was the face of a collective effort of continued Métis activism. Métis activism is rooted in Métis identity, worldview, and culture. Too often, history has portrayed Gabriel Dumont as the military leader and Louis Riel as the political genius. This understanding of Gabriel is limited and relies on stereotypes that the previous Canadian historical narratives have promoted. Although Louis Riel had a formal education in Montréal and Gabriel

[185] "Union Nationale Métisse Saint-Joseph Du Manitoba," Union Nationale Métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba, 2020, https://www.unmsjm.org.

gained his education on the plains, it does not mean that Louis Riel was the only one who was politically astute. Instead, I demonstrate that Gabriel was able to move within these political spheres. He was able to garner significant support for the Métis. While the east was not Gabriel's home, he was still able to navigate urban society, elite social circles, and Canadian politics effectively.

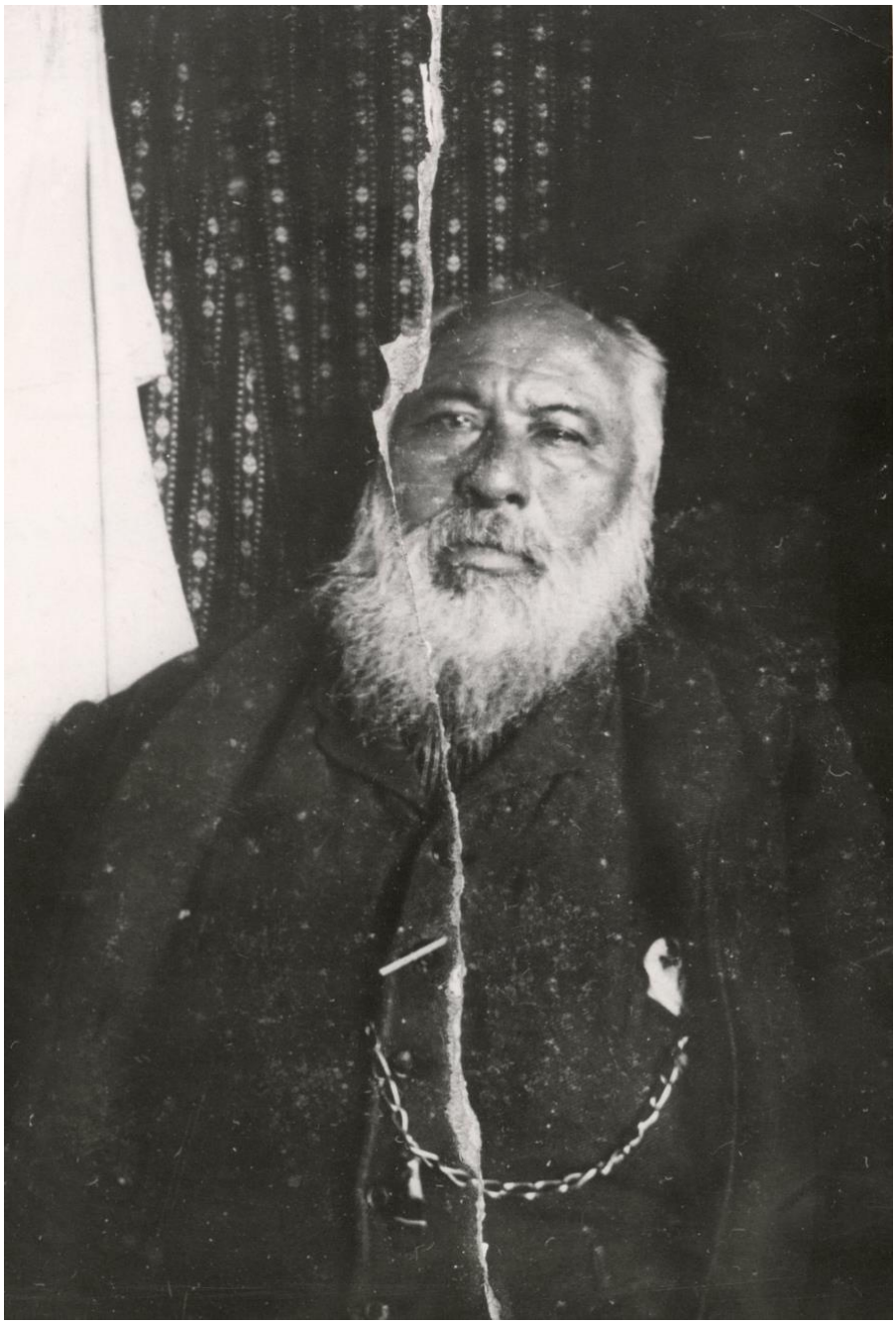

Figure 29 Gabriel circa 1898 courtesy Montana Historical Society

5- Ka Kiskiskchechik- Those Who Remember

[*Gabriel] was a known hero because of the uprising. But that wasn't the only part that made him heroic.*

Trevor Cameron- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[1]

As this dissertation has explored thus far, the Dumont family enmeshed itself into the Métis Nation on the plains and took part in important aspects of Métis history including the 1885 North West Resistance. As such, the Dumont family has provided insights into the ways they lived, experienced, and formed their Métis identity. This chapter moves beyond the nineteenth century to explore the role of the past within contemporary Métis identity, and more specifically how Gabriel Dumont, as an important historical figure, connects Métis people to their Métis identity. As Trevor Cameron states above, Gabriel's significance is not just because of his role in the 1885 North West Resistance. He is a hero because of how his life has been taken up and remembered by Métis individuals and the broader community as part of their narratives of the past. In remembering Gabriel's life, they incorporate into their own sense of self aspects of Métis identity that they see reflected in their knowledge of Gabriel. In doing so they merge symbols such as names, places, events, and people into a collective or shared understanding.[2] Therefore, how Métis people remember and mobilize Gabriel's life adds depth to our understanding of not just his life, but also to how the past is used to maintain and promote Métis identity.

For greater understanding of Gabriel Dumont's role within Métis historical consciousness, this chapter explores aspects of Gabriel's life that some Métis people consider significant in their conceptualization of the past and of being Métis, and how this collective understanding of Gabriel has been mobilized over time. First to comprehend a broader shared understanding of his life within Métis society, I look to the way his image has been mobilized and promoted within

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[1] Trevor Cameron, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, January 24, 2020.

[2] Naomi Rosh White, "Marking Absences: Holocaust Testimony and History," in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, 2002, 172–82, http://www.vlebooks.com/vleweb/product/openreader?id=none&isbn=9780203435960; Amos Funkenstein, "Collective Memory and Historical Consciousness," *History and Memory* 1, no. 1 (1989): 7.

two Métis organizations. The Métis organizations that I focused on are the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan (formerly part of the Association of Métis Non & Status Indians of Saskatchewan, or AMNSIS) and the Gabriel Dumont Institute. Both organizations use Gabriel's image as part of their logo and branding, in turn promoting and maintaining his place as a significant figure within Métis historical consciousness. The designs demonstrate that a group of Métis people came to an agreement as to what Gabriel represents for them. Additionally, both organizations were formed during the important mid-twentieth century renewal of Indigenous activism connected to the Red Power movement, ensuring that the Métis experience was acknowledged.[3] As such, their expression of Métis nationhood and use of Gabriel Dumont as a symbol relies upon a shared understanding to communicate certain messages. Temporally this allows this chapter to access how Gabriel's life was maintained between his death in 1906 to contemporary times where his image is still used by these organizations.

Second, I explore how Gabriel is understood by some Métis individuals through interviews with nine research partners. My research partners' positionalities are described in more detail within this dissertation's introduction. Their participation in this research by no means brings a comprehensive look at how all Métis people understand Gabriel Dumont. Rather, they provide insight into their interpretation of Gabriel's life and role within Métis identity today. Each person comes from a different place in their connection to Métis culture, some are reconnecting, and others grew up immersed within their Métis culture. Thus, they bring different levels of knowledge and experiences to the discussions of Gabriel. Our conversations focused on two themes: their knowledge of Gabriel and the role of historical figures within Métis culture and identity. Some of my research partners have family knowledge about Gabriel passed down to them, while others bring an understanding of him more influenced by the sources publicly available. They represent a wide range of ages and genders, and while they do not speak for all Métis people, they offer a unique perspective on how Métis people connect to their culture and identity through historical figures. Combined these sources provide a cross section of the Métis population to allow similarities in understandings of Gabriel to be elucidated. Thus, I argue that for many Métis people, because of historical consciousness, Gabriel Dumont as a hero links

[3] Lisa Bird-Wilson and Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, *An Institute of Our Own: A History of the Gabriel Dumont Institute* (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2011).

contemporary Métis people to their history and culture ultimately informing their understanding of being Métis.

MÉTIS HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

I think people relate to him, his struggles and they feel that he's almost like a hero.

Terry Laroque- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[4]

For greater understanding of how knowledge of Gabriel is incorporated into contemporary Métis identity, I turn to the concepts of collective memory and historical consciousness. Collective memory is defined as the socially framed memories of historical individuals within a particular group that can be found in both written and oral sources.[5] Ursula J. Beek and Bernard Lategan add that historical memory is "the repository of language, traditions, values, customs, music, architecture, dress code and usually a belief in the common ethnic origin of a specific cultural group, that is, of all the elements of the identity of that group."[6] In a similar vein, historical consciousness is defined as "collective understandings of the past, the cognitive and cultural factors which shape those understandings, as well as the relations of historical understandings to those of the present and the future."[7] Peter Seixas provides an overview of the study of historical consciousness, noting that the specialization stems from the work of French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs on collective memory and in some ways the two terms can be seen as synonyms. However, Seixas notes that German writers define historical consciousness as a modern era concept as it is focused on the historicity of events, where memory has no sense of time.[8] Seixas refers to the definition of historical consciousness as the area "in which collective memory, the writing of history, and other modes of shaping images of the past in the public mind merge."[9] As such, this chapter will use the term historical consciousness with the understanding

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[4] Terry Laroque, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, December 6, 2019.
[5] David W. Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee: The Lakotas and the Politics of Memory* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 3.
[6] Ursula J. van Beek and Bernard Lategan, "Historical Memory and Identity," in *Democracy under Construction: Patterns from Four Continents* (Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2005), 352.
[7] University of British Columbia, "Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness," University of British Columbia, http://www.cshc.ubc.ca.
[8] Peter Seixas, *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* (UTP: University of Toronto Press, 2006), chap. Introduction.
[9] Seixas, 10.

that it includes the concept of collective memory, along with other variations of the term including historical memory, to describe the way in which Métis individuals and the broader Métis community remember the past through historical landmarks, including, events, rituals, and people, and incorporate that knowledge into their Métis identity.

Historical consciousness is especially useful in reference to Indigenous peoples as history plays a large part of their contemporary lives. Indigenous shared memories emphasize stories of family and land, but Indigenous bodies also preserve past traumatic events.[10] Patricia M. Schulte and Judith G. Hall explore the way that memories of harrowing events affect the collective consciousness of groups. Schulte and Hall describe how recent science has shown that biological memory is carried in the body's cells, the DNA passed between generations, transmitting the effect of the past to the next generations.[11] Schulte and Hall refer to the Dutch Hongerwinter (Hunger Winter) as an example of where science has revealed how the effect of past events, such as famine, is transmitted onto future generations who never experienced the famine themselves through biological memory.[12] As such, the North West Resistance has likely created lasting memories that "deeply affected the lives of individuals and the collective consciousness" of the Métis on a physical and psychological level.[13] Several Indigenous Studies scholars have framed their work with the concept of historical consciousness. Keith Carlson, Gregory Smithers, David Grua, and Susan Hill have explored how historical consciousness allows Indigenous nations to maintain their identity, despite traumatic events and forced relocations, demonstrating that these events can strengthen community identity.[14] While these scholars explore the historical consciousness of the Stó:lō, Haudenosaunee, Cherokee, and Lakota respectively, I approach

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[10] Margaret Conrad et al., *Canadians and Their Pasts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), chap. 5; Patricia M. Schulte and Judith G. Hall, "Echoes Across Generations," in *Memory*, ed. Phillipe Tortell, Mark Turin, and Margot Yong (Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies, 2018).
[11] Schulte and Hall, "Echoes Across Generations," 57–58.
[12] Schulte and Hall, 58–59.
[13] Schulte and Hall, 57.
[14] Keith Carlson, *The Power of Place, the Problem of Time: Aboriginal Identity and Historical Consciousness in the Cauldron of Colonialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010); Susan M. Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (Winnipeg. Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 2017); David W. Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee: The Lakotas and the Politics of Memory* (Oxford University Press, 2016); Gregory Smithers, *The Cherokee Diaspora: An Indigenous History of Migration, Resettlement, and Identity*, Lamar Series in Western History (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2015).

historical consciousness through one individual, because heroes are often a gateway to the memories of important events. To date, despite the importance of the topic of Métis identity in current political discussions, and conversations about shared history as a part of Métis identity, Métis Studies scholars have placed little emphasis on Métis historical consciousness as a theoretical lens.[15] Rather, discussions have mostly been relegated to the use of Métis history within Canadian historical consciousness.

It is important to approach these topics through a Métis lens, as often the dominant narrative of the past—in this case Canadian—is deliberately exclusionary towards Indigenous interpretations. This is because, as Jonathan Vance states, "the dominant memory emerges after a struggle between conflicting interpretations of historical events and comes to act as a bulwark for the establishment. The past becomes an excuse for the present, justifying the social or political order on the grounds that it was ordained by history."[16] As such, Canadian historical narratives are still often exclusionary towards Indigenous narratives, to avoid the conversations of Canada's problematic treatment of Indigenous peoples. Further, when Indigenous issues are included within the Canadian historical narrative, the focus is often First Nations-centric, excluding Métis experiences. Beek and Lategan in their discussion of memory and identity, argue historical memory can be inclusive or exclusive. The exclusive mode perpetually holds different groups apart, where the inclusive version is open to new and alternative options, often framed through the renaming of events or places to incorporate them into the grand narrative.[17] The exclusive mode is demonstrated in Myla Vicenti Carpio's examination at how Indigenous historical memory is currently situated within American museums, revealing that historical national narratives are often situated on the exclusion of the "other's" history. Carpio suggests that by

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[15] Both Fehr and McRea look at Métis understandings of the Métis Resistances in their dissertations. McRea's work focuses much more on its position within Canadian collective memory. Fehr uses Dene prophet Willow Heart as an entrée to discuss local stories of 1885. Amanda Beth 1984- Fehr, "'It Was Our Lives, That Was What We Believed': Indigenous Histories of Catholicism in Northwest Saskatchewan" (Ph.D., Saskatoon, Sask., University of Saskatchewan, 2018), https://harvest.usask.ca/handle/10388/8332; Matthew McRae, "Remembering Rebellion, Remembering Resistance: Collective Memory, Identity, and the Veterans of 1869-70 and 1885" (Ph.D., University of Western Ontario, 2018), https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/5299.

[16] Jonathan F. Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 9.

[17] Beek and Lategan, "Historical Memory and Identity," 352–53.

using "discursive inclusion, a retelling or distortion of Indigenous history is designed to justify the colonizers' violence and exploitation of Indigenous peoples, lands, and resources. The processes of colonization have created this 'absence' in the American historical memory, which shapes how Indigenous history, space, or place have been and continue to be renamed, redefined, and destroyed."[18]

For some time Canada's historical narratives aligned with the exclusionary mode focusing on the British and white population and narrative of nation building, however, in the era of reconciliation Canada's historical narratives have moved to the inclusionary mode by including Indigenous peoples and other minorities' histories. However, as a result Indigenous leaders are often depicted as Canadian historical figures. Sean Carleton reveals this trend regarding Canada's use of Tecumseh's life in relation to the War of 1812. Carleton concentrates on a free comic produced by the Canadian government to celebrate the hundred-year anniversary of the war, where six individuals, including Tecumseh, are featured as "distinctly Canadian heroes because of the pivotal roles they played in forging 'Canada' out of the flames of the War of 1812."[19] Carleton argues this co-optation of Tecumseh is part of a nation-building project, used to justify and promote colonialism.[20] The Canadian historical narrative has also assumed the history of the Métis, in particular in relation to the 1869-70 Red River Resistance and the 1885 North West Resistance, attempting to erase Canada's problematic role in these events by positioning them as nation-building occurrences, rather than attacks upon the Métis.[21] This appropriation of Métis history is demonstrated in the repositioning of Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont within the Canadian historical narrative. In exploring this concept, Jennifer Reid provides a detailed description of how Louis Riel has moved from someone framed by Anglophone-Canadians as insane to one accepted as a Canadian hero, aligning this interpretation closer to the long-held

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[18] Myla Vicenti Carpio, "(Un)Disturbing Exhibitions: Indigenous Historical Memory at the NMAI," *The American Indian Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (2006): 620, https://doi.org/10.1353/aiq.2006.0018.
[19] Sean Carleton, "Rebranding Canada with Comics: Canada 1812: Forged in Fire and the Continuing Co-Optation of Tecumseh," *Active History* (blog), April 8, 2014, http://activehistory.ca/papers/history-papers-15/.
[20] Carleton.
[21] A good overview of this is seen in McRae, "Remembering Rebellion, Remembering Resistance:"

Métis and Francophone-Canadien versions.[22] Adam Gaudry also explores this process regarding Louis Riel, arguing this change is an inversion of colonization.[23] Such assimilation of Indigenous history is problematic as it attempts to create a grand narrative that removes Canada's violent past regarding Indigenous peoples. National grand narratives are discussed by Stéphane Lévesque and Jean-Philippe Croteau who clarify the connections between historical consciousness, narrative, and memory in the Quebec school system. Lévesque and Croteau argue that national narratives are problematic as the histories do not portray the complex cultures within Canada and the needs of individuals in understanding the past.[24] Thus, it is important to ensure that multiple historical narratives continue as part of Canada's story, and in doing so this chapter explores Gabriel Dumont and his role in Métis historical consciousness.

THE ROLE OF HISTORICAL FIGURES IN MÉTIS CULTURE AND IDENTITY

I know that he was highly respected by the Métis families because many Métis families had a picture of Gabriel Dumont over their doors … just like you would put the Queen or Jesus Christ.

Jeannine Dumont Christopherson- Métis Research Partner[25]

Within historical consciousness, historical figures, or heroes, are an important access point for contemporary people to connect to the past. According to Jorn Rüsen, historical consciousness is passed through a variety of narration styles, including exemplary that demonstrates general rules of conduct for the group through the stories of individuals or events.[26] Exemplary narratives use a hero's life to demonstrate community values as practiced in the past to reinforce their importance within the culture today.[27] This common recalling binds individuals

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[22] Jennifer Reid, *Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada: Mythic Discourse and the Postcolonial State* (Albuquerque, United States: University of New Mexico Press, 2008).
[23] Adam Gaudry, "The Métis-ization of Canada: The Process of Claiming Louis Riel, Métissage, and the Métis People as Canada's Mythical Origin," *Aboriginal Policy Studies* 2, no. 2 (February 19, 2013), https://doi.org/10.5663/aps.v2i2.17889.
[24] Stéphane Lévesque and Jean-Philippe Croteau, *Beyond History for Historical Consciousness: Students, Narrative, and Memory* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 18.
[25] Jeannine Dumont Christopherson, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 11, 2019.
[26] Jörn Rüsen, "Historical Narration: Foundation, Types, Reason," *History and Theory* 26, no. 4 (1987): 91–92, https://doi.org/10.2307/2505047.
[27] Caryn Coatney, "'Here Comes John Curtin': The Historical Consciousness of a Journalists' Hero," *Historical Encounters: A Journal of Historical Consciousness, Historical Culture, and History Education* 10, no. 1 (March 6, 2023): 3, https://doi.org/10.52289/hej10.101.

together as a people, as memory informs identity and nationhood.[28] Thus, the remembering of a hero embeds the person into the collective memory of the group, emphasizing the ideals and forgetting the flaws.[29] Daniel Francis argues that the role of the hero is to represent the best of a collective self, knitting together a community through "shared self-regard" as represented by the hero.[30] Francis furthers that in Canada, heroes often emerge from the struggles of minority groups, and are individuals that reflect the values of the community through selfless deeds of valour.[31] Métis historical figures, Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont are also connected to the struggle of a "minority group." Darren Préfontaine, in discussing Gabriel Dumont, clarifies how heroes

> often seamlessly blend history, myth, and legend. Coming in a variety of archetypes, heroes can be altruistic, tragic, flawed, saintly or profane. They usually exhibit all-too-human foibles, and often blur moral boundaries, making them admired by some and reviled by others. Larger than life, heroes possess qualities given to very few people. They are often altruistic, audacious, brave, brilliant, compassionate, cunning, and physically powerful.[32]

For example, Reid, describes how Louis Riel has become a type of mythic hero within Canadian historical narratives. A mythic hero is a cultural figure who is connected to the origins of the culture and are usually individuals who had difficult journeys and return with something "necessary and valuable (perhaps a tool) for their culture, an acquisition of which signals a 'new creation' of some sort."[33] In this case, Louis Riel is a mythic hero for his role in the creation of Manitoba. However, within Métis society Louis Riel is not the only hero. Métis scholar and artist Sherry Farrell Racette remarks "For many years, while I acknowledge Riel's importance, he was not my personal hero. Give me Gabriel Dumont, helping the women and children after the fall of Batoche, galloping away shouting, 'They'll never take me alive.'"[34] Therefore, Gabriel's life as

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[28] Reid, *Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada*, 219.
[29] Funkenstein, "Collective Memory and Historical Consciousness," 5–6.
[30] Daniel Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History* (APP: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997), 113.
[31] Francis, 113.
[32] Darren R. Prefontaine, *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words* (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2011), 1.
[33] Reid, *Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada*, 48.
[34] As quoted in, Prefontaine, *Gabriel Dumont*, 1-2.

remembered by Métis people is that of a mythic hero, he is connected to an important aspect of Métis history and the memories of him often emphasize his virtues. His life is used to demonstrate an idealized version of Métis identity and culture that connects people to the past and their Métis identity.

This idealistic version of heroes then also helps transmit moral values through historical consciousness, by using people from the past to create cultural universals, inspiring strong character within the present.[35] Geoffry Cubitt, denotes that the memory of an event, individual, or historical experience begins at its time of being, but its position and understanding within historical consciousness is shaped over time. For example, events with powerful influence on a group may, in later generations, be remembered in less specific ways and focus more on the legacy of the event. As such, Cubitt argues the importance is placed on the ability of a historical person to "embody moral or existential messages that are found meaningful at later moments."[36] As such a figure, Gabriel Dumont holds importance not for his actions in the past but due to how remembering his life influences Métis identity in the present.

Collective Understandings of Gabriel Dumont

[G]oing by and seeing like the Gabriel Dumont Institute, or in Saskatoon seeing the statue that my grandma's brother posed for in memory of Gabriel Dumont. It's just absolutely crazy to just think, that's such a huge part of history really wasn't that long ago.

Allysa Woodrow- Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[37]

Collective understandings of Gabriel Dumont and the promotion of his position within Métis historical consciousness is demonstrated through two Métis organizations' decision to use his image within their branding. The effectiveness of this use of Gabriel's image is shown in Woodrow's comment above, where the Gabriel Dumont Institute's physical existence allows her to tap into collective understandings of Métis history. Métis activism did not end after the 1885 North West Resistance. Métis organizations across the prairies collectively continued their political activism, and in the mid-twentieth century they incorporated the image of Gabriel

[35] Seixas, *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*, 22.
[36] Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 213–14.
[37] Woodrow, interview with Krystl Raven.

Dumont, promoting his importance within Métis historical consciousness.[38] By no means do these organizations imply that all Métis people understood Gabriel Dumont's life in this way, but they do demonstrate a shared understanding within a group who made the decision to use his image. This use of Gabriel's image was meant to communicate certain messages, these references to the past acting as a short-hand code.[39] Two organizations linked to this period are the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan (AMNSIS)/Métis Society of Saskatchewan (MSS)[40] and the Gabriel Dumont Institute.[41] I look to these organizations for several reasons. First, education is an important aspect of historical consciousness, and both organizations include the transmission of historical narratives in their activities.[42] Second, these Métis organizations refer to historical narratives within their work to link the past, present, and future.[43] Last, these organizations adopted Gabriel's image as a representation of their mission statements and identity. As Beek and Lateran state "identity narratives offer an image of one's own group and an explanation of the relationship of the group with the 'other.' Also, their contents change, depending on the intended purpose: a different version of identity narrative would be used to mobilise a group from the one meant to be heard by the 'other', or the one intended to depict the world at large and the group's place in that world."[44] In essence, these groups understood that the histories known for Gabriel Dumont would result in his image transmitting different messages depending on the audience.

These organizations were founded in a period of renewed Indigenous activism. AMNSIS was founded in 1975 led by Jim Sinclair and was influenced by the American Indian

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[38] Kelly Saunders and Janique Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, Reprint edition (UBC Press, 2019), 6.
[39] Conrad et al. note that the past anchors a sense of historical trajectory for Indigenous peoples and that political activists in the community refer in short-hand codes to a distinctive origin, a malleable present and a future. Conrad et al., *Canadians and Their Pasts*, 103.
[40] The MSS would rename itself as the Métis Nation Saskatchewan (MNS) in 1993. Darren Préfontaine, "Métis Nation–Saskatchewan," Indigenous Saskatchewan Encyclopedia-University of Saskatchewan, https://teaching.usask.ca/indigenoussk/import/metis_nation-saskatchewan.php.
[41] A more detailed description of AMNSIS/MSS and the shifting of groups in the region can be found here. Préfontaine, "Métis Nation–Saskatchewan."
[42] Seixas, *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*; Lévesque and Croteau, *Beyond History for Historical Consciousness*.
[43] Conrad et al., *Canadians and Their Pasts*, 103–4.
[44] Beek and Lategan, "Historical Memory and Identity," 353.

Movement.[45] It started with a community-based organization and shifted to focusing on achieving funding from federal and provincial governments for Métis and Non-Status community projects.[46] The MSS, founded in 1964 and led by Joe Amyotte merged with the Métis Association of Saskatchewan in 1967. Then AMNSIS folded into the new version of MSS in 1988.[47] MSS and AMNSIS were—like many regionally based Indigenous organizations—led by men, but Métis women were involved in this period of activism, though often outside of these organizations. This period of Indigenous activism saw these male dominated organizations acting as the official groups recognized by the Canadian Government, with Indigenous women's political work often seen as less important.[48]

Figure 30 AMNSIS Letterhead circa 1985. Credit An Institute of Our Own: A History of the Gabriel Dumont Institute

Because of their interaction with colonial governments AMNSIS decided that they should develop an official letterhead for their quest of funding, self-determination, and self-governance.

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[45] AIM and its role in identity building can be seen in Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ualberta/detail.action?docID=431141.
[46] AMNSIS recently re-formed in 2020. "Association of Metis, Non and Status Indians Saskatchewan," AMNSIS, accessed June 30, 2023, https://www.amnsis.ca; Préfontaine, "Métis Nation–Saskatchewan.
[47] Préfontaine, "Métis Nation–Saskatchewan.
[48] Conversations about the tensions between gendered activism can be seen in Nickel's article, Troupe and Stevenson provide good insight into the political work of Métis women in this same time period. Sarah A. Nickel, "'I Am Not a Women's Libber Although Sometimes I Sound Like One': Indigenous Feminism and Politicized Motherhood," *American Indian Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (Fall 2017): 299–335, https://doi.org/10.5250/amerindiquar.41.4.0299; Cheryl Lynn Troupe, "Métis Women: Social Structure, Urbanization and Political Activism, 1850-1980" (Masters Thesis, Saskatoon, Sk, University of Saskatchewan, 2009), http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/etd-12112009-150223; Cheryl Troupe and Allyson Stevenson, "From Kitchen Tables to Formal Organization: Indigenous Women's Social and Political Activism in Saskatchewan to 1980," in *Compelled to Act: Histories of Women's Activism in Western Canada*, ed. Sarah Carter and Nanci Langford (Univ. of Manitoba Press, 2020), 218–52.

The choice of what image to include on the letterhead was made through careful consideration of who best represented them and their needs at the time: Gabriel Dumont or Louis Riel. AMNSIS members decided that Gabriel exemplified a "real fighter," while Louis Riel was more known as a negotiator.[49] Thus, they believed that Gabriel's image better represented current Métis needs, which included intense struggle for welfare and other social programs (see fig. 30).[50] Gabriel then became the symbol of AMNSIS, projecting an image that expressed the solidarity of the organization. They understood that a particular image communicated a certain message to their audience. It is not that Gabriel was not diplomatic or political, but rather that AMNSIS was relying on his reputation within the Canadian historical narrative as a fighter and adversary. In comparison, Louis Riel had numerous and conflicting understandings within Canadian historical narratives. Riel had been used by the Francophone community as a martyred patriot, in many ways consistently neglecting the fact that Riel was Métis, where the anglophone community shifted from framing Louis Riel as a traitor to a cultural emblem as Canadian narratives surrounding the 1885 North West Resistance transformed.[51] In comparison, Gabriel Dumont's reputation within Canada remained quite stable as he did not receive the same attention that Louis Riel had outside of the Métis community. As such, by using his image, AMNSIS was relying on the Canadian Government not holding a more complex view of Gabriel; instead, they were hoping that the image communicated a clear message: Gabriel Dumont did not back down and neither did AMNSIS.

AMNSIS/MSS also promoted Gabriel's place within Métis historical consciousness, ensuring remembrances of his life connected the past to the present and that Métis people would interpret his image in a Métis-centered way. As Joan Tumblety notes, remembrances of individuals, 'memory makers,' influence the meaning of the past as their image is "shared among the wider social groups, often on a national scale."[52] The organizations did this by including biographical articles on Gabriel in the magazine *New Breed.* In doing so, Gabriel's life is part of a

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[49] Lisa Bird-Wilson and Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, *An Institute of Our Own: A History of the Gabriel Dumont Institute* (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2011), 24.
[50] Bird-Wilson and Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, 24.
[51] Reid, *Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada*, chap. 2; Francis, *National Dreams*, chap. 5.
[52] Joan Tumblety, ed., *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*, The Routledge Guides to Using Historical Sources (London: Routledge, 2013), 69.

history education aimed at Métis people.[53] The articles connected Gabriel to Métis culture and historical events. For example, the July 1982 issue on Métis culture featured "Gabriel Dumont: A Military Genius." Author Rob Lafontaine highlighted Gabriel's main life events, noting his hunting and military skills, but added "Dumont was highly revered for his kindness and generosity."[54] The article further positioned Gabriel as a leader who found peace "between the Dumont clan and the Blackfoot tribe," alongside his willingness to fight for Métis freedom in both 1869 and 1885.[55] The article demonstrates several aspects of Gabriel's role within Métis historical consciousness. The magazine's inclusion of his life ensured that he is positioned as a 'memory maker' within Métis historical consciousness. The article also helped shape the way in which Gabriel is remembered by Métis people, ensuring that a Métis centred understanding of his life was promoted. As well, his inclusion in the special edition on Métis culture maintained Gabriel as a national symbol of Métis culture. As such his image would represent more than a strong military leader to Métis people, he would be a symbol of Métis culture, strength, and nationhood.

GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE
of Native Studies and Applied Research

Figure 31 GDI Logo, different variations of this one image are used for different aspects of the Institute. Credit gdins.org

Métis centered understandings of Gabriel were relied on when AMNSIS/MSS decided to create an educational institute. The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) was an extension of ongoing education activism in the late 1970s, creating educational opportunities through branches in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert.[56] The formation of GDI began with a 1976 cultural conference, where the issues about Indigenous education equity and control were discussed and the lobbying for a Métis controlled education institute began.[57] The GDI's use of Gabriel's image

[53] Seixas, *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*; Lévesque and Croteau, *Beyond History for Historical Consciousness*.
[54] Rob Lafontaine, "Gabriel Dumont: A Military Genius," *New Breed Magazine*, July 1982.
[55] Lafontaine, 3.
[56] Préfontaine, "Métis Nation–Saskatchewan."
[57] Bird-Wilson and Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, *An Institute of Our Own*, chap. 2.

and name was purposeful, as the members who had decided on a logo viewed him as a symbol of Métis culture (see fig. 31).[58] The vision for the institute was that it would "sustain and advance the cultural and historical identity of the Métis people."[59] Indeed, "Métis culture is a critical feature of all GDI programming. The Institute is a conservator of Métis history and culture, a national leader in Michif-language initiatives, and a trusted source for those seeking Métis-specific information throughout the world."[60] Thus, as "culture, cultural pride, and cultural appreciation played a primary role in the Institute's creation," their use of Gabriel's image reinforces his life as an embodiment of Métis culture.[61] As Darren Préfontaine wrote, "as a leader of the buffalo hunts, a political activist, keeper of traditional knowledge, and as the military leader of the Métis people, Dumont will always be remembered for his fierce determination to ensure his people's survival. Out of respect for Dumont and his legacy, the Métis and Non-Status Indian people of Saskatchewan named their educational institute after him."[62] When viewed within the context of the version of Gabriel's life promoted within *New Breed*, it is easy to see how, for many Métis people, Gabriel is inextricably part of Métis culture, and that many understood the message communicated by the Institute's name and logo. Additionally, as with the AMNSIS logo, outsiders— the federal and provincial governments— may have interpreted the image more along the lines of resistance and strength against colonial powers' attempts to erase Métis culture. As such, Gabriel's image as a symbol of the Métis people allows different audiences to interpret the message through their perceptions of Gabriel. These organizations' promotion of Gabriel Dumont as a symbol of Métis culture, history, and resistance helped maintain knowledge of his life through the twentieth century, and in part became why some Métis individuals understand Gabriel Dumont as an important part of Métis history and culture. However, it is important to acknowledge the heteropatriarchal norms present in the choice of Gabriel as the representation of Métis culture and activism, demonstrating the ways that he holds

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[58] Lisa Bird-Wilson and Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, *An Institute of Our Own*, 30.
[59] Bird-Wilson and Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, 19.
[60] Gabriel Dumont Institute, "Mission and Values | Gabriel Dumont Institute," Gabriel Dumont Institute, https://gdins.org/about/overview/mission-statement/.
[61] Joan Tumblety, ed., *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*, The Routledge Guides to using Historical Sources (London: Routledge, 2013), 69.
[62] As quoted in Bird-Wilson and Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, *An Institute of Our Own*, 24–25.

more social and cultural capital, even after his death, than Métis women. The organizations' debate regarding the use Gabriel Dumont or Louis Riel as the representation of Métis activism and culture, highlights the ways that both Métis society and settler society privilege men within the political space, de-emphasizing the political work and leadership of Métis women historically and contemporarily.

Personal Interpretations of Gabriel Dumont

While the two organizations provide an example of how more collective understandings of Gabriel Dumont were promoted in Métis historical consciousness, I turn to my research partners to gain insight into how some Métis people understand him. Just as this dissertation has explored the ways Métis identity was experienced on a more personal level, understanding historical consciousness also is experienced through individuals. The interpretations and importance placed upon Gabriel is not wholly universal and has changed over time. This is most apparent in my discussions with my research partners. For example, some Métis people found it difficult to discuss Gabriel and the events with which he is associated. This was especially true in the years following the 1885 North West Resistance. For some families, recalling the events of the Resistance was painful, "1885 was forbidden to be discussed," though some still did, carefully.[63] In the interview with Bruce Flamont he mentioned that,

> [1885] was an absolute hidden part of our family, a hidden part of our history. And by choice, I guess my grandfather and his father, my great grandfather, would have had set the rule that we're never going to talk about Batoche or Louis Riel or Gabriel Dumont. So, in hushed tones, my aunts and uncles would mention him of course. You can't live a Michif life without talking about that…. So, you knew what you were not allowed to talk about. But we knew that we had to anyway, so we did it cautiously and then sometimes inadvertently. Someone, somebody would mention Gabriel Dumont or Louis Riel and there'd be a hush and a quietness and then conversation would go on.[64]

Here, Flamont associates Gabriel with both positive and painful aspects of being Métis. Métis people have not forgotten these stories, but instead kept them private. This silence is not unusual,

[63] Bruce Flamont, interview with Krystl Raven, February 14, 2020.
[64] Flamont.

as Rosh White, describes how traumatic events are often marked more by their absences; not spoken or written about directly. Instead, the past is communicated through "shared symbols and is embedded in cultural practices" in part because language fails to capture the experience in any accurate way.[65] According to Flamont, his family quietly maintained the knowledge and preserved a shared understanding of the events of the past. Flamont's description also alludes to the fact that the refusal to discuss the past may be connected to a person's generation. Flamont's grandfather and great-grandfather might have been less willing to discuss the past because they were alive during the Resistance and experienced it firsthand. However, as White notes, speaking about traumatic events is a vital part of constructing and maintaining identity, as it is the "name we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves in narratives of the past" that holds importance.[66] We see this in Flamont's example about the Resistance and Gabriel, his aunts and uncles felt it necessary to discuss, interpret, and share the memories of the Resistance and Gabriel, despite his grandfather's refusal. Perhaps because they were further removed temporally from the Resistance, it became increasingly important to them to discuss Gabriel and the North West Resistance to maintain its memory. So, while memories of difficult aspects of the past are avoided, they only maintain their importance within historical consciousness because they eventually are discussed to maintain a collective understanding of their importance.

It is in the way that people remember events and individuals from the past that allows a connection to larger concepts, such as culture and identity, to be formed.[67] The sections that follow focus on my research partners' knowledge of Gabriel. The relevant themes emerged through their responses to broad questions on characteristics of Gabriel, stories their families shared about him, their thoughts on his role within contemporary Métis culture and identity, and his importance to the Métis Nation. In our interview Jeannine Dumont Christopherson explained:

> Well, I think in all cultures, you need somebody in your culture to look up to. I think you sort of pride yourself in your history and what has happened in the past and

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[65] Rosh White, "Marking Absences: Holocaust Testimony and History," 173–74.
[66] White, 180.
[67] White, "Marking Absences: Holocaust Testimony and History," 172–82; Tibor Pólya, "National History Contributes to the Definition of National Identity," *Journal of Psychology Research* 7, no. 8 (August 28, 2017), https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5542/2017.08.006; Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 214.

> perhaps even pattern yourself after the qualities of these people. So, I think that's why it's important to have people who are big names, so to speak, or who people know, and they've made certain accomplishments because, I mean, over the years, the Métis were put down a lot, by white people, and racism was quite predominant. And it still is today, and not as much perhaps, but you need these figures, to sort of look up to.[68]

Here, Dumont Christopherson highlights the importance of exemplary narratives, historical Métis role models, as a connection to the past. Collectively, my conversations with the research partners revealed how individuals use their knowledge of Gabriel, founded in their Métis historical consciousness, to connect to aspects of Métis history and culture.

My discussions with the research partners revealed that, for many of them, Gabriel embodied the ideal Métis man. This is not unusual as in exemplary narratives, the lives of historical figures often become the embodiment of the nation, their lives painted to emphasize the ideals of the nation within the group memory. Caryn Coatney provides an example of this in her exploration of journalists' portrayal of Australian Prime Minister John Curtin. In an exemplary narrative, journalists retouched Curtin's life to better represent the ideal and removed the aspects that did not align.[69] In doing so, Curtin's life was used by journalists to remind their audiences of Australia's best aspects in the past to encourage the embracing of those virtues in a period of nation building. In doing so these journalists were not rewriting the past, but rather emphasizing the characteristics of Curtin that allowed him to be an embodiment of Australian ideals, glossing over any negative aspects of his life.[70] Gabriel as a Métis hero is no different, as Francis remarks, "this is the role of the hero, after all: to represent ourselves at our collective best."[71] Therefore, my research partner's understandings of Gabriel is in many ways an idealized version of him, not a fully nuanced account of his life.

Gabriel's life as an embodiment of the nation then is remembered in a way that exemplifies aspirational Métis virtues, knowledge, and abilities. This position as the ideal Métis man has been

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[68] Dumont Christopherson, interview with Krystl Raven.
[69] Caryn Coatney, "'Here Comes John Curtin': The Historical Consciousness of a Journalists' Hero," *Historical Encounters: A Journal of Historical Consciousness, Historical Culture, and History Education* 10, no. 1 (March 6, 2023): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.52289/hej10.101.
[70] Coatney.
[71] Francis, *National Dreams*, 113.

promoted over time. For example, a Métis elder in the 1950s told historian Grant MacEwan "old Gabe is my kind of hero…. He had everything I admire ….”[72] This was also referenced in my interviews. For example, Bruce Flamont explained to me:

> Gabriel Dumont on one hand, was the quintessential Michif man in that he lived comfortably, very comfortably off the land. He also was cognizant of the other nations, the First Nations within the Michif homeland, meaning the Saulteaux, the Cree, the [A'aninin], the Blackfeet, all the nations within the Michif homeland and he knew them, and he knew other languages. But on the other hand, this is what I'm saying is the quintessential Michif man. My grandfather could speak all of those First Nations languages also, and so did my grandfather's peers, it was not uncommon. Matter of fact, it was more common for the Michif person at that time to be multilingual, of which Gabriel Dumont was. Very mobile. Mobile meaning, he was comfortable in what we call now Montana…he lived comfortably in the Missouri Valley, in parts of Ohio also in Northern Alberta, Northern Saskatchewan and what could be described as our center, I guess our headquarters—in Red River….[73]

Here Flamont positions Gabriel as the ideal Métis man in the past and highlights several aspects of Gabriel's life that align with cultural qualities of being Métis: language and a connection to the Métis homelands. Further, by linking Gabriel's ideal characteristics, such as language, to the men in his life, Flamont is using Gabriel to connect to memories of his own family, bringing a personal element to the remembering of Gabriel. Some of the other research partners echoed this notion. Jonas Weselake-George commented, "So I think Gabriel Dumont partly embodies, for me a demonstration of how to be Indigenous in lifestyle, values, communication, and kinship….”[74] Importantly, Weselake-George does not only mention aspects of Gabriel's life that are relevant in the past but incorporates these into contemporary Métis life. While Weselake-George does not directly refer to Gabriel in the sense of Métis masculinity, as Gabriel identified as male that gendered understanding is still at included if not directly spoken to. As Weselake-George

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[72] As quoted in Prefontaine, *Gabriel Dumont*, 2.
[73] Flamont, interview with Krystl Raven.
[74] While Weselake-George used the term Métis here my interpretation of our conversation was that he was referring to being Métis. Jonas Weselake-George, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 21, 2019.

includes kinship into his understanding of Gabriel, Woodrow's grandmother, described Gabriel to Woodrow a man who protected, provided, was talented and educated in the Métis ways (hunting and languages) but through an emphasis of wahkootowin with stories of his kindness. Combined, these remembrances of Gabriel demonstrate how heroes are used to transmit the ideal values and virtues to the present Métis life and as an ideal to strive for in the future.

An interesting aspect of Gabriel as the embodiment of Métis ideals were comments made by my research partners regarding Gabriel's physical appearance. Weselake-George remarked that Gabriel "had a sense of physical presence,"[75] Woodrow commented "you always hear how how strong he was,"[76] and DuMont referenced how others recognized features of Gabriel in his own physical presence.[77] My research partner's comments in this regard relied on their having knowledge of his appearance. Memorialization of heroes through images is an important aspect of promoting them within historical consciousness as their appearance acts as a physical representation of the nation. For example, in Vance's discussion of the historical consciousness of the First World War, he discusses how the soldier— as representation of Canada— becomes understood as a youthful figure full of strength and vigour, a citizen taken from the farm or wilderness to protect his country. This image of the soldier was reinforced through statues, posters, and fiction novels.[78] Similarly, an important part of Gabriel's place in historical consciousness is his role as a Métis military leader, and perhaps his physical presence is something that is embossed in Métis' historical consciousness because, like Vance's soldier, Gabriel's image has been accessible and mobilized over time.

The Métis memory of Gabriel is also influenced by the ease of access to the promotion of his life in physical representations. His image has been easily accessible through photographs from his lifetime as well as numerous artistic renderings. Consistently, however, these representations of Gabriel's physical self-have held consistent themes of representing strength. So much so has his image been reproduced that Darren Préfontaine's book *Gabriel Dumont: li Chef Michif in Images and in Words* was published in 2011 where historical photographs, illustrations, artistic representations, and more are included.[79] Published by the Gabriel Dumont

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[75] Weselake-George, interview with Krystl Raven.
[76] Woodrow, interview with Krystl Raven.
[77] DuMont, interview with Krystl Raven.
[78] Vance, *Death So Noble*, chap. 5.
[79] Prefontaine, *Gabriel Dumont*, 2011.

Institute, this book was aimed at a Métis audience. Historical descriptions of Gabriel reinforced this idea of physical strength, and John Kerr —who knew and lived with Gabriel— addressed this assumption that Gabriel was physically intimidating. Rather Kerr attempts to correct these depictions by describing Gabriel "to be about forty because of his thickset appearance. He was of medium height, square of shoulder, with a homely but kind face, and his chin was adorned with a scraggly beard. He was by no means huge, as so many writers have depicted him, and would not have weighed at that time more than 165 or 170 pounds."[80] As Kerr describes, it was not that Gabriel was a large man who took up a lot of physical space, rather it is that the understanding of him is larger than life, an idealized image of him.[81] As an epitome of the Métis people, his physical representation of strength is a reminder of the vigour of the Métis and their continued presence and the potential of the future.[82] This physical presence was not limited to a gendered understanding by one of my research partners. Mz. D saw Gabriel's physicality as something that represented being Métis regardless of your gender, "You got that stocky look…you could tell if, whether they're female or male, that they were Métis."[83] Here Mz. D shows that the ways a Métis person interprets Gabriel's physical presence is not only associated with his gender but also their own gender and life experience—connecting Gabriel's physical self to themself. While not directly stated by my research partners, the message I took from these comments regarding his appearance was that their understanding of Gabriel's physicality was something they were proud of, something that could be seen in their own families, a resilience and strength that continues today as Métis people. While the reality was that Gabriel was not a tall man, or an incredibly strong man, in their idealization of him, his physical presence becomes something that represents a deeper concept than just his physical body.

In addition to being a physical representation of being Métis, our discussions of Gabriel's life forwarded themes of Métis culture, including the buffalo hunt. As this dissertation has explored, the buffalo hunt was a key part of Métis culture and Gabriel Dumont's life. As I've shown, Gabriel was a talented buffalo hunter—he was elected as buffalo hunt chief multiple times— and he also demonstrated his firearm skills after the Resistance on Buffalo Bill's Wild

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[80] John Andrew Kerr, "Gabriel Dumont: A Personal Memory," *Dalhousie Review* 15 (1935-36): 53.
[81] Vance, *Death So Noble*, 147.
[82] Vance, 136.
[83] Mz D, Interview with Krystl Raven, Telephone, March 17, 2020.

West show. My research partners remarked that Gabriel's talent as a hunter was well known, and that meant he was a good provider for his family and community. Flamont explained, "If you were an excellent hunter, you meant a lot to the community."[84] Here Flamont is remarking on several connected themes discussed in this dissertation. A community's strength depended on how well everyone contributed to the survival of the group. This meant that Métis hunters, especially those in leadership positions, were often called on to provide for those in the community who needed help procuring meat, such as the elder members. That the conversation of the buffalo hunt came up with several research partners reflects their understanding of the importance of this aspect of Métis history and culture, and that Gabriel's reputation as a hunter was linked to a deeper meaning of providing for the family, a value important in Métis culture today.

Our discussions of Gabriel's hunting also sparked conversations regarding family stories of hunting and their own experiences or skills. The conversations illustrated how narratives of Gabriel's life function in Métis historical consciousness to connect the past to the present.[85] The importance of the discussion, of understanding this aspect of Gabriel, was not that it only existed in the past, but that they could find connection to being Métis in the present. For some, hunting was a cultural connection between Gabriel and their family experiences. For Curtis DuMont, it was also a skill he saw as shared with his relative Gabriel—albeit in more modern ways. For DuMont, his shooting talent in gaming, using the same hand-eye coordination that allowed Gabriel to be such a successful hunter, was something he directly related to his Métis identity and culture. He proudly recalled friends' comments on this skill, "'Oh he's a Dumont it makes sense.' It's a genetic gift."[86] For DuMont, hunting skills—real or virtual—are something he sees as inherited through his Métis ancestry. Through his understanding of video games as a practice of a skill that he connects to Métis culture and history, he brings a deeper meaning to it for himself, grounding it in the memories of family. Further, in taking this cultural aspect of the past signaled through the memory of Gabriel, Curtis DuMont is recognizing that change happens and that cultural practices can be used in a more modern context and still hold important value to his sense

[84] Flamont, interview with Krystl Raven.
[85] Rüsen, "Historical Consciousness: Narrative Structure, Moral Function, and Ontogenetic Development," 73–74.
[86] DuMont, interview with Krystl Raven.

of identity.[87] By remembering Gabriel, my research partners connected to their Métis culture and its long history of hunting, and the discussions elicited memories and stories of family hunting as well as a pride in continuing that part of their Métis culture, even in more modern variations.

Other cultural themes in our conversations demonstrated how what my research partners saw as important regarding Gabriel often differed from Canadian historical interpretations. For example, my research partners consistently admired his linguistic proficiency: Weselake-George commenting, "He was multilingual, you know."[88] Woodrow also discussed language, recalling that her grandmother taught her that Gabriel's multilingualism was a sign of Métis education, "he was educated without having an education… he spoke seven languages."[89] By connecting language and education, Woodrow does two things; first, she recognizes the importance of language within Métis culture, and two, that non-Métis society did not recognize this proficiency as important or a type of education. However, she understood that the lesson her grandmother was giving to her was that Métis knowledge may not be recognized by non-Métis people, but it is an important aspect of being Métis. Lack of recognition regarding Gabriel's education is something that has been discussed by those close to him. For instance, John Kerr, who had lived with the Dumont family for several years, highlighted this lack of understanding in a 1935 article that he wrote in response to a journalist's portrayal of Gabriel. Kerr insisted, "Gabriel Dumont was not an ignorant Métis, as a certain magazine writer asserts. Far from it. He knew many different [Indigenous] dialects and spoke Cree (his mother's tongue) with great facility. He had a remarkable memory and could read and write in French."[90] Kerr understood that non-Métis people often considered Gabriel to be uneducated, because he did not have a Western education, disregarding his Métis cultural knowledge and skills. This same interpretation is shown by Woodrow in her interview with me, almost a hundred years from when Kerr wrote his article. Therefore, more Métis centered interpretations of Gabriel's linguistic proficiency view it as admirable and reminds contemporary Métis people that intelligence and education go beyond Western knowledge. That prioritizing Métis cultural knowledge is important.

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[87] Rüsen, "Historical Consciousness: Narrative Structure, Moral Function, and Ontogenetic Development," 76–77.
[88] Weselake-George, interview with Krystl Raven.
[89] Woodrow, interview with Krystl Raven.
[90] Kerr, "Gabriel Dumont: A Personal Memory," 54.

It should be noted that while many of my research partners reflected on Gabriel's linguistic proficiency, only two of them mentioned that their families spoke Michif, demonstrating how Gabriel's memory can connect Métis people to cultural aspects with which they may not have personal experience. The younger participants did not mention being able to speak Michif or other Indigenous languages in our discussions of the topic. Unfortunately, for many Métis people, language is one of the most difficult parts of Métis culture to reclaim, because the language was nearly lost. For decades Canadian educational policies aimed to remove Indigenous languages from Indigenous peoples. The Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission revealed that while Métis individuals were not forcibly sent to Indian Residential Schools, Métis students did attend them. Post-World War II, provincial governments expanded educational opportunities for Métis people, including integration programs into public schools. However, public schools funded by provinces aimed to integrate Métis students into a Western education system, neglecting the teaching of Michif. Furthermore, the "60's Scoop" saw many Métis children adopted into non-Indigenous families, perpetuating assimilation and erasure of their Métis identity.[91] This has resulted in few fluent speakers remaining after generations were placed into educational systems that aimed to erase Indigenous culture and to assimilate them into Euro-Canadian society.[92] But as seen here, the importance of the language and of maintaining it is accessed through the remembering and discussions of Gabriel.

Moreover, in the face of racism and oppressive colonial policies, some Métis families hid their culture from others, limiting their use of language. Jeannine Dumont Christopherson discussed how her family told others they were French, not Métis, which was partly accomplished by not speaking Michif in front of others. She recalled, "we spoke Michif too, but

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[91] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Canada's Residential Schools: The Métis Experience: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 3* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt19rmbp1; Allyson D Stevenson, *Intimate Integration: A History of the Sixties Scoop and the Colonization of Indigenous Kinship* (University of Toronto Press, 2021).

[92] Lorena Sekwan Fontaine, "Redress for Linguicide: Residential Schools and Assimilation in Canada / Réparations Pour Linguicide: Les Pensionnats et l'assimilation Au Canada," *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 30, no. 2 (September 29, 2017): 183–204; Carole Blackburn, "Culture Loss and Crumbling Skulls: The Problematic of Injury in Residential School Litigation," *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 35, no. 2 (2012): 289–307, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1555-2934.2012.01204.x; Zoe Oxaal, "Removing That Which Was Indian from the Plaintiff: Tort Recovery for Loss of Culture and Language in Residential Schools Litigation," *Saskatchewan Law Review* 68 (2005): 367.

mom, if she came into a room with a good French person who spoke good French, she switched immediately and spoke really good French. But when we were with our Métis families, it was always Michif patois that they spoke."[93] Dumont Christopherson reiterates how Métis people were fluent in several languages, but for many contemporary families there is a generational gap in these aspects of their Métis culture. The memory of Gabriel connects them to this part of being Métis, even if they cannot speak the language themselves. Remembering Gabriel as talented with languages is a reminder of its importance and necessity within Métis culture.

One important cultural theme threaded through our discussions: kinship. As this dissertation has demonstrated, kinship, or wahkootowin, is an important aspect of being Métis. The interviewees were either related to Gabriel or they saw him as an important part of their family history, which may explain why kinship was such a prominent theme in our discussions. Scholar Anna Green delves into the importance of family memory and its role within historical consciousness. Her research, which speaks to Halbwachs' collective memory, uses oral histories to demonstrate that families transmit stories of the past across generations, finding that how those family members use the knowledge differed depending on their generation. The youngest generation engages with family stories to plan for the future; older generations to trace the family to the present. Further, Green finds that, like in broader historical consciousness research, family stories were often focused on ethical and proper behavior.[94] Wahkootowin is an important Métis value that dictates the behavior of Métis people, placing an emphasis on kinship and the responsibility to relatives. This responsibility was reflected in my research partner's decision to participate in this study, several reflecting on how they discussed their participation with their families and were encouraged by them to participate as a representative of their family. They told me that they felt it was an important family responsibility to ensure that Gabriel's memory was continued and that their family knowledge of him was included.

Additionally, two of my research partners told family stories of Gabriel that demonstrated how he embodied kinship in his actions. My research partner Allysa Woodrow discussed how for her grandmother it was important to tell her children and grandchildren that Gabriel had valued

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[93] Dumont Christopherson, interview with Krystl Raven.

[94] Anna Green, "Intergenerational Family Memory and Historical Consciousness," in *Contemplating Historical Consciousness: Notes from the Field*, ed. Anna Clark and Carla L. Peck (New York, NY, UNITED STATES: Berghahn Books, Incorporated, 2018), 200–211, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ualberta/detail.action?docID=5611774.

kinship relations. Woodrow mentioned her grandmother's stories of how her great-grandfather "remembers Möise talking a little bit about [Gabriel] and then mainly [Möise] saying how amazing [Gabriel] was as a person…. [Gabriel] cared about his family and he cared about literally anyone in his past that needed help or was Métis."[95] Woodrow remembered her grandmother "saying something about [Gabriel] feeling such great sympathy when one of his kids died."[96] For Woodrow, her grandmother ensured that she did not just understand Gabriel as a relative, but that her knowledge of him showed him as a good relative. Other stories revealed how Gabriel demonstrated kinship responsibility by participating in family events. Terry Laroque noted that his "grandma married [his] grandfather in 1892, and Gabriel gave her away."[97] This couple was part of Gabriel's extended family, and his attendance and participation demonstrates how much he valued family. This wedding had taken place during a period when Gabriel was often away from the Saskatchewan area; thus, he likely had to travel some distance to attend the event. This family story aligns with those shared earlier in this dissertation, including Gabriel's travels to Canada to fulfill family obligations, such as seeing Veronique's wedding and the birth of her child. The lesson of this story as told by Laroque was not just that Gabriel attended, but that Gabriel's attendance was a demonstration of his responsibility to his extended family. Both examples see family histories using Gabriel to demonstrate the importance of Métis kinship practices. Therefore, the discussion of Gabriel and kinship moves him from being only a touchstone to the past to a way to transmit moral values within the family.

Further, the Métis understandings of Gabriel, especially those told through family members, is rooted in wahkootowin, showing the importance of the concept in the past, present, and future. They ensure that Gabriel's memory is not centered only on his role as a military leader, that his motivations and morals are understood as being as important as his fighting ability. In doing so they promote a more complex understanding of Métis values that include kinship, being reliable, and expressing love and emotion. This is important, because as Anthony Smith describes, revered historical figures exemplify virtue and emphasize the best of a community's traditions, often those seen to be lacking within the current period, allowing the

[95] Allysa Woodrow, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 2, 2019.
[96] Woodrow.
[97] Laroque, interview with Krystl Raven.

embracing of those virtues.[98] As shown, my research partner's discussions of Gabriel showed how they see him as a link to Métis culture, and while they may be viewing his life through an idealized lens, it allows these important cultural values to be transmitted through generations.

Beyond acting as a link to Métis culture, discussions with my research partners revealed how Gabriel's life events connected them to the theme of Métis resistance. As discussed, Gabriel's role as a leader in the Resistance is one reason why his memory has been maintained through Métis historical consciousness. Trevor Cameron explained that historical Métis figures connect contemporary Métis to the past in ways similar to important events and cultural celebrations of the 1885 North West Resistance, "They're touchstones. You know it's like the [human] version of Back to Batoche."[99] Back to Batoche is an annual festival celebrating Métis culture that is held at the Batoche National Historic Site in Saskatchewan. Here, where the final battles of the 1885 North West Resistance occurred, Métis people travel from across Canada to gather and celebrate their Métis culture. This event debuted in 1971 as a modern version of St. Joseph's Day, a traditional Métis celebration.[100] As such, Batoche—as both a physical location and ceremony—becomes a significant symbol for Métis people, as it positions the importance of the Resistance from the past into the present, where "it can be directed towards the future" of the Métis peoples.[101] Back to Batoche also works as a memorial to the North West Resistance and the lives lost there, ensuring they maintain their place within Métis historical consciousness. The organizers of Back to Batoche ensure that this memorial and cultural event remain Métis controlled over time, unlike the federally managed historic site. Vance elucidates that groups can maintain memories of the past through memorials to help ensure that alternative interpretations do not form. He determines that there are two common approaches to memorials that achieve this goal: aesthetic or utilitarian.[102] The utilitarian form here aligns the most with the Back to Batoche celebration. This concept holds that "memorials should perform some function while commemorating the dead; they could be hospitals, community halls, schools, athletic centres, or

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[98] Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, Repr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 66.
[99] Cameron, interview with Krystl Raven.
[100] "Heritage Days," Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada, https://indigenouspeoplesatlasofcanada.ca/article/heritage-days/.
[101] Gabriella Elgenius, *Symbols of Nations and Nationalism: Celebrating Nationhood* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 18.
[102] Vance, *Death so Noble*, chap. 7.

anything else that increased the social wealth of the community."[103] Back to Batoche does this, situated on the historic battle grounds, the celebration promotes Métis culture, but is placed in a way that also encourages the remembrance of the Resistance and those who fought for Métis rights. The celebration, and individuals remembered with it, are then maintained as part of the "founding myths," rooting community in territories and myths of heroism.[104] Further, by maintaining the Métis memory of the Resistance—while also celebrating and promoting Métis culture—remembering acts as a form of decolonization by promoting the Métis interpretation of the past.[105] My research partners shared that, like Batoche, Gabriel is a symbol that reminds them of the importance of the Resistance, and by remembering him, they can bring the past into the present. Gabriel holds a special place in Métis historical consciousness owing to his leadership in the Resistance, and remembering his life maintains the meaning of the North West Resistance in the narratives of the Métis people.

Métis centered interpretation was shown in how some of my research partners connected Gabriel's involvement in the Resistance to deeper Métis knowledge and ways of life. While Gabriel was known as a "smart military man,"[106] his intelligence in battle was rooted in Métis knowledge. For instance, Terry Laroque pointed out that Gabriel used the community's knowledge of the land to their advantage in battle, to have "the troops come to us on our land."[107] Importantly, this highlights that Gabriel was not just skilled as a leader in battle, he had a deep understanding of the Métis homelands and used that to the Métis' advantage. Thus, the Resistance was more than just a physical encounter; it was Métis knowledge, culture, and people fighting against the Canadian militia, and the Métis ways of life against the influx of settlers. Furthermore, Laroque's emphasis on Gabriel's knowledge of the land benefitting the Métis in the Resistance demonstrates how, by remembering Gabriel and the Resistance, Laroque is also reminded of the Métis' long history on the land they had fought for in 1885. Not only is this a Métis interpretation, but it is also a family centered understanding. Laroque's connection of Gabriel and the Resistance to knowledge of the land is unsurprising. As a Dumont family

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[103] Vance, 204.
[104] Elgenius, *Symbols of Nations and Nationalism*, 18.
[105] Ruanni Tupas, "Remembering as a Decolonizing Project in Language Policy," in *A Sociolinguistics of the South* (Routledge, 2021).
[106] DuMont, Interview with Krystl Raven.
[107] Laroque, interview with Krystl Raven.

member this association aligns with the finding of Green's research on family narratives that determined land and environment were important dimensions of historical consciousness.[108]

Since one important aspect of historical consciousness is that it takes the memories of the past and transcends time into the future, remembering Gabriel also connects some people to modern Métis activism. For example, my research partner's knowledge of Gabriel and the Resistance emphasized his courage. According to Kirsten Van Der Velden, Gabriel was "fearless and he was willing to fight to the death for this culture."[109] Fighting for the Métis way of life, a battle that continues for Métis people today. For Van Der Velden, Gabriel's bravery gives her courage to fight for her Métis culture. Van Der Velden continued:

> We come from an important figure in Canadian history. A person who fought hard for our rights and for our culture. A culture that many of us have lost due to assimilation. We do ourselves and Gabriel Dumont a disservice when we do not hold on to what he fought for us to have and maintain. The more I realize this, the more I want to restore the culture in my family and fight back to defend it and empower and teach others to do the same. We have to channel Gabriel Dumont and honour what he did for us in our family line and for our culture. We cannot simply let the culture die in our line, what a tragedy that would be.[110]

Van Der Velden describes how remembering Gabriel is an act of decolonization.[111] Van Der Velden also highlights a theme mentioned by several research partners: the shared responsibility to continue this knowledge. Historical consciousness relies on the telling of the past, as Seixas states, it "invokes debts of the current generation to its collective forbears, while marking injustices perpetrated by or on others outside of the group. In this way the narrative provides a larger justificatory context for collective actions to be taken in response to current challenges."[112] By evoking the memory of Gabriel, Métis people such as Van Der Velden continue to resist colonial powers and attempts of assimilation, refuelling the collective need to maintain and protect Métis culture and identity against outside forces.

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[108] Green, "Intergenerational Family Memory and Historical Consciousness," 207.
[109] Kirsten Van Der Velden, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 20, 2019.
[110] Van Der Velden, interview with Krystl Raven.
[111] Tupas, "Remembering as a Decolonizing Project in Language Policy."
[112] Seixas, *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*, 6.

CONCLUSION

Historical consciousness plays a vital role in a nation's identity. Its shared history, and the shared understanding and interpretation thereof, is part of what binds a group of people together. This chapter has delved into how, within Métis historical consciousness, individuals from the past become part of this memory system, functioning as a touchstone to history. This means that Gabriel is not significant because he existed in the past, but rather, because of the way he has been remembered over time by Métis people. Because of this, it is essential that information on Gabriel include Métis conceptions of his life.[113] Métis knowledge of Gabriel offers unique insight into Métis culture, which is often missed by non-Métis records of him.

Many of my research partners pointed out that it was difficult to find information on Gabriel, and that they wished they had more resources to pass on to their family members to help maintain his place within Métis historical consciousness. Written accounts of Gabriel's life are scarce and often relegated to the Canadian military's version of the Resistance. In addition, many non-Métis works published on Gabriel have strong racist undertones that make them incompatible with the needs of Métis people seeking information on him to learn more about their culture and history.[114] However, Métis people have preserved Gabriel's memory, primarily passing the knowledge on through oral traditions, which are not always accessible to Métis people who do not have direct access to this knowledge through their relatives. For historical figures to be accessible, the relevant information should also incorporate Métis interpretations and knowledge, because the Métis narrative of Gabriel's past shapes Métis people's understanding of their identity.

Scholarship on historical consciousness demonstrates the importance of education, a group narrative transmitted to the next generation, allowing historical consciousness to connect the past to present identity.[115] Specifically, Shang-Hui Shin reveals that national identity is connected to the historical narratives people are informed by and have access to, demonstrating

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[113] Flamont, interview with Krystl Raven.
[114] For instance, McKee's book portrayed Gabriel as a savage fighter. Sandra Lynn McKee, *Gabriel Dumont: Indian Fighter* (Calgary: Frontier Publishing Ltd., 1968).
[115] Seixas, *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*; Rüsen, "Historical Consciousness: Narrative Structure, Moral Function, and Ontogenetic Development"; Lévesque and Croteau, *Beyond History for Historical Consciousness*.

the importance for Métis people to have access to Métis narratives of the past.[116] My research partner, Bruce Flamont blamed this lack of accessibility on colonialism, as he believes that colonial governments purposefully prevented information from being available—an attempted erasure of Métis history through broader colonial policies, such as residential schools, which aimed to eliminate the Métis culture. According to Flamont, Métis conceptions of history were

> replaced by the English way of knowing that distorts Michif reality…. Today's Michif people are able to document and research the history that was not available to us. And so, I think more research and more writing should be done on Gabriel Dumont. And I think this part of our history must be re-recorded, if you will.[117]

While Métis people have consistently looked to Gabriel as an important symbol of their culture, conventional historical records have not reflected this. As discussed in this chapter often Métis history has been assimilated into the Canadian historical narrative. This dissertation has aimed to correct this by interpreting Gabriel's life through a more Métis based understanding.

As part of that goal, this chapter has shown how some Métis people, collectively and individually, view Gabriel as a nexus between several aspects of being Métis. Remembering his life connects them to the events of the 1885 North West Resistance. This Métis knowledge, and interpretation of the events and people associated with the Resistance, counters colonial narratives by maintaining it as part of Métis— not Canadian—history. However, as seen here, the Métis people have also mobilized Gabriel's image to leverage the Canadian narrative of him—as a "rebel fighter"—to demonstrate their own strength and conviction in their political activism. In other contexts, Gabriel has been used as a symbol of Métis culture relying on Métis conceptions of him as the embodiment of the ideal Métis man. Further, this chapter has shown how Gabriel Dumont allows individual Métis people to connect the past into their present understandings of Métis culture and identity. However, most importantly, this chapter has brought historical consciousness into the realm of Métis Studies. By using Gabriel as a subject, I have examined the roles of historical figures in contemporary Métis identity and illustrated the importance for Métis interpretations of their lives.

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[116] Shang-Hui Shin, "National Identity and National History: Role of Historical Narratives on the Identity Construction" (Ph.D., Melbourne, University of Melbourne, 2011), http://minerva-access.unimelb.edu.au/handle/11343/36502.
[117] Flamont, interview with Krystl Raven.

Conclusion

She would mention [Gabriel] saying that he was such a family man, that he loved everyone, and was so kind. It just reminds me of my great great grandma holding him as he died. Like, that's how close of a family we were.

Allysa Woodrow-Dumont Family Member & Research Partner[1]

A century after the 1885 North West Resistance, the Métis continued to celebrate Gabriel's life. For some, like Allysa Woodrow the memories hold personal connections to Gabriel's life reminding them of specific family values. At other times the remembrances occur on a larger scale. In 1985, during a family reunion, a statue was unveiled on the anniversary of the Resistance. Dennis Fisher, a long-time Métis supporter, developed the idea for the statue with community support, and he ensured that it was completed in time for the anniversary.[2] The statue was unveiled in Saskatoon before being transported to Duck Lake for a Dumont family reunion.[3] Family members gathered around the statue for photos, continuing to bring Gabriel's memory into their historical consciousness and understanding of being Métis.[4] The statue, like much of Gabriel's life, represents being Métis and important aspects of Métis

Figure 32 Gabriel Dumont Statue Saskatoon, Sk. Photo credit Cheryl Troupe *Prairie History* (2021)

[1] Allysa Woodrow, telephone interview with Krystl Raven, December 2, 2019.
[2] Cheryl Troupe, "Historical Memory and the Statue of Gabriel Dumont in Saskatoon's Friendship Park.," *Prairie History*, no. 4 (Winter 2021).
[3] Troupe, 2.
[4] Trevor Cameron, *Shadow of Dumont*, Online (Karma Films, 2020).

history—for both individuals and the broader Métis community. However, knowledge of who he is or what the statue represents is not always well understood by non-Métis. As Métis historian Cheryl Troupe notes, the statue does not have a plaque that informs people of the history of Gabriel Dumont, the North West Resistance, or their connection to Saskatoon—the statue's final home—nor does it mention the long legacy of Métis political activism of which Gabriel was an essential part.[5] For Métis people, the statue speaks to "relationships, responsibilities, and reconciliation," and to his importance to Métis people in Saskatchewan.[6] However, while the statue indicates his importance in both Métis and Saskatchewan history, it does not necessarily provide greater understanding of Gabriel to either Métis or non-Métis people.

Gabriel lived in the nineteenth century, a period when Métis culture expanded significantly in the northwest. The Dumont family moved west and into the vast economy of the buffalo hunt that shaped the lives of many Métis families. Through the lens of wahkootowin, this research shows how the Dumont family's kinship decisions weaved the children of Jean-Baptiste and Josephte into existing Métis families and communities, an integral part of this family's development of a Métis identity. Further, the Dumonts demonstrate several kinship patterns established by previous scholarship, including cross-cousin marriages, locality, and naming practices. However, the Dumont family also elucidates variations to these patterns due to the socio-geographic, economic, and temporal context in which they lived. The Dumonts' embracing of Métis kinship principles was demonstrated through their adoption of children who needed homes. Altogether, this dissertation has shown the intrinsic link between kinship and Métis identity, adding a more individual and family-based understanding of the process.

This research has also provided substantial additions to historical conceptions of Métis territory and its connection to Métis identity. By tracing the Dumont family's lives on the plains, I have elucidated how they ultimately broadened their understanding of home to include the vast areas of the plains. The Dumont family illustrates how kinship and livelihood were integral to connecting Métis peoples to the land. Métis lives existed within a vast space, moving families across the land as people married, worked, and moved based on what was best for their family at the time. The Métis homelands are so vast because of Métis culture; however, this culture also

[5] Troupe, "Historical Memory and the Statue of Gabriel Dumont in Saskatoon's Friendship Park."
[6] Troupe, 3.

kept the homelands within a specific region. The geographical location of the Métis homelands influenced Métis identity formation; therefore, the relationship between land and identity is inseparable. Buffalo hunting, freighting, and guiding required Métis people to have intimate knowledge of a huge area of land. Moreover, as the Métis traversed the plains, they understood that their homelands were not just Métis lands and that other groups also had claims to the territory. The Dumont family demonstrates how Métis people understood and lived on the Métis homelands, and that they were willing to die to protect their tenure on this land.

The Dumonts' Métis identity is further explored through their position as leaders within Métis communities. The Métis leadership system—rooted in wahkootowin and Métis democracy—continues today as Métis people continue to advocate for and protect their way of life. Contemporary Métis governments applied sufficient political pressure on the Canadian Government for the Métis peoples to be included in the Canadian *Constitution Act* as Aboriginal peoples in 1982, and they continue seeking rights for self-governance and land, continuing the legacy of historical leaders like Gabriel.[7] This dissertation has explored the historical roots of contemporary Métis political activism by highlighting historical Métis leadership systems. A Métis democratic process allowed communities to elect the best leaders for the situation at hand. As shown, this democratic process was fluid and only applied as needed. This system privileged Métis men as the head of households and as those eligible for elected leadership. Additionally, this democratic process required leaders to understand their strengths, as those with the best skillset for the situation would be elected. Gabriel's life provides a lifelong example of this historical leadership process. Following Gabriel through his leadership as a buffalo hunt chief, the shift to a settled lifestyle in St. Laurent de Grandin, and the 1885 North West Resistance, I elucidate the adaptability of the Métis leadership process. By focusing on leadership rather than the broader political systems, this dissertation has added further insight into the processes in which the Métis managed conflict within and outside of their communities.

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[7] Métis Nation Saskatchewan, "Métis Rights Conference," February 2020; Thomas Isaac, "A Matter of National and Constitutional Import: Report of the Minister's Special Representative on Reconciliation with Metis: Section 35 Métis Rights and the Manitoba Métis Federation Decision," February 2020; Yvonne Boyer and Larry Chartrand, eds., *Bead by Bead: Constitutional Rights and Métis Community* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2021); Kelly Saunders and Janique Dubois, *Métis Politics and Governance in Canada*, Reprint edition (UBC Press, 2019).

This work offers a decolonized view of Gabriel's life, departing from the one-dimensional portrayal of him as a military leader. Gabriel was not just a military man but also a leader, husband, and dedicated member of his community. His military leadership was, in part, why his life is known by the public. By playing the role of a military leader and telling tales of the battles of the 1885 North West Resistance during his time at the Wild West show and on his public speaking tours, he cemented himself in public history as no more than that. However, this research has revealed that after the Resistance, Gabriel was not just a military man seeking fame. Rather, he was a Métis leader leveraging his cultural capital to create income and support for both him and his community, fulfilling his kinship responsibilities. Further, through following this period of Gabriel's life this dissertation has revealed that he was a savvy political actor, working within the Canadian and American political spheres to the advantage of the Métis.

Unfortunately, this public work resulted in Gabriel being portrayed in the Canadian narrative as a military man, uneducated in comparison to Louis Riel. This one-dimensional understanding serves to justify the Canadian Government's actions during the 1885 North West Resistance and the policies that followed. However, a deeper analysis of Gabriel's life produces a much more nuanced understanding of the way in which his life holds importance for Métis history and identity. Historical consciousness is complex, and the ways in which individuals and the broader Métis community remember Gabriel has shifted over time. This research has shown the role of heroes within Métis historical consciousness, connecting contemporary Métis people to aspects of Métis culture and history. Since his death, Gabriel's life story has been understood and mobilized in various ways within Métis historical consciousness. For many Métis people, Gabriel is associated with numerous aspects of Métis identity, and he is considered the embodiment of the ideal nineteenth-century Métis man. Further, as a touchstone to the past, Gabriel's image contains multiple meanings depending on the audience. Métis organizations have leaned into Canadians' understanding of Gabriel as an adversary, using him to communicate how serious they are about protecting Métis rights, while simultaneously projecting a message of Métis culture and strength. Most importantly, this dissertation has shown that as a Métis hero, Gabriel's life holds importance within contemporary Métis culture, and access to Métis knowledge about him is important.

Lastly, this dissertation has added to the conversations of Indigenous masculinities, and more specifically Métis masculinity. Responding to the Indigenous masculinities theories of Kim Anderson, Robert Innes, John Swift, and Brendan Hokowhitu I assert that Métis masculinity in the nineteenth century was shaped by two key factors: wahkootowin, inherited through their Indigenous kin; and patriarchy, inherited through their Euro-Canadian ancestors and interactions with colonial institutions.[8] The result was a form of masculinity in which men were privileged; but unlike hegemonic patriarchy, historical Métis masculinity did not aim to subjugate Métis women. Further, Métis masculinity embraced wahkootowin, as men were expected to be protectors, providers, and mentors, fulfilling their kinship responsibilities and working to ensure the success of the community. While Métis women had important roles and responsibilities within the family and community, men became the public representation of leadership, especially in contact with colonial leadership.[9] As a consequence, Métis women were limited in their political voice and ability to access certain rights, such as title to land. This would increase as interaction with the settler state increased and settlement in the northwest increased. However, the gender dynamics in Métis communities were more complex than in Western patriarchal ideals. Métis men also adopted practices that were considered feminine to Euro-Canadians. It was not unusual for them to help raise children, sew moccasins, or openly show their emotions toward their loved ones. This aspect of Métis masculinity, however, was not revealed to settler and colonial persons. Instead, Gabriel exhibited a very colonial version of masculinity when interacting with Canadian society. Moreover, Gabriel's masculinity was accepted in different

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[8] Kim Anderson, Robert Alexander Innes, and John Swift, "Indigenous Masculinities: Carrying the Bones of the Ancestors," in *Canadian Men and Masculinities: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Wayne Martino and Christopher J. Greig (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2012), 266–84; Brendan Hokowhitu, "Producing Elite Indigenous Masculinities," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 23–48, https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2012.10648840; Brendan Hokowhitu, "Taxonomies of Indigeneity: Indigenous Heterosexual Patriarchal Masculinity," in *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*, ed. Robert Alexander Innes and Kim Anderson (Winnipeg, CANADA: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 62–79, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/usask/detail.action?docID=4384343.

[9] Cheryl Lynn Troupe, "Métis Women: Social Structure, Urbanization and Political Activism, 1850–1980" (University of Saskatchewan, 2009), http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/etd-12112009-150223; Cheryl Troupe and Allyson Stevenson, "From Kitchen Tables to Formal Organization: Indigenous Women's Social and Political Activism in Saskatchewan to 1980." In *Compelled to Act: Histories of Women's Activism in Western Canada*, ed. Sarah Carter and Nanci Langford (University of Manitoba Press, 2020), 218–52.

ways, depending on whom he was interacting with. To access settler political spaces, Gabriel was required to emphasize certain aspects of his masculinity, repress parts of his personality, and leave his territory and family for extended periods. While he exhibited a very patriarchal version of Métis masculinity to Canadian society, he did not have the same access to power that white Canadian men had. Additionally, the Canadian historical narrative maintained the memory of Gabriel through this limited understanding of his life, emphasizing the violence of his military career rather than the kinship-centered motivations for his actions.

Altogether, this dissertation has used Gabriel's life to provide deeper insight into Métis identity. Using the lens of wahkootowin, the Dumont family demonstrates how kinship influenced and shaped the family's decisions as they forged their legacy in the northwest, linking Métis identity, homelands, culture, leadership, and legacy. Further I have argued that Gabriel, as a Métis hero, demonstrates how Métis historical consciousness harnesses individuals' lives to enable contemporary understanding of Métis identity. In following Gabriel's life, this work has also expanded the knowledge within Métis studies on Métis homelands, leadership, historical consciousness, and established a framework for understanding Métis masculinity. By centring a Métis focus on Gabriel's life, this research also offers an expanded understanding of his life. He was a leader, family man, political activist—and he was Métis.

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