

Parks Canada and the 1885 Rebellion/Uprising/Resistance

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ABSTRACT. The memory and significance of the rebellion or resistance of 1885 in western Canada have been contested by Canadians for over a century but no consensus has emerged. In the 1920s the major sites related to the events were commemorated by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Initially the Board interpreted the sites in the context of building the Canadian nation and referred to the events as a rebellion. By the middle of the 20th century, the growth of regionalism, the rise of the Aboriginal rights movement and changes in historiography led the Board interpret the events as an uprising, a clash between cultures and regions. The interpretation has continued to evolve and at some sites, notably Batoche, the story of the resistance is now told primarily from the point of view of the Métis people.

SOMMAIRE. Le souvenir et l'importance de la rébellion ou résistance de 1885 à l'ouest du Canada ont depuis plus d'un siècle fait l'objet de débats auprès des Canadiens, sans que l'on parvienne à un consensus. Dans les années 1920 les principaux sites associés à ces événements furent commémorés par le Service canadien des sites et monuments historiques. Au début le Service interprétait les sites dans le contexte de la nation canadienne et faisait référence à une rébellion. Au milieu du vingtième siècle la croissance du régionalisme, l'essor du mouvement pour les droits autochtones et les changements historiographiques conduisirent le Service à voir dans ces événements un soulèvement, un conflit entre cultures et régions. L'interprétation a continué d'évoluer, si bien que des sites tels que Batoche racontent l'histoire de la résistance d'un point de vue surtout métis.

If each generation writes its own history, it is equally true that each generation creates its own heritage. In Canada, national historic sites are a visible and public part of the Canadian heritage, identified by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and administered and interpreted by Parks Canada. Some sites, such as those associated with the 1885 Northwest Rebellion or Resistance, have been a part of the national historic sites system since it was organized in the 1920s. Although the sites have remained the same, the way in which they have been interpreted by Parks Canada and the meanings assigned to them have changed dramatically.

It might be more accurate to say that each generation writes its own *histories*. Although most nation states strive to produce a single, unifying account of their past, subordinate, competing versions of the past often survive beneath the dominant or official version. Sometimes the subordinate versions rise to modify or supplant the dominant story. In *The Past in the History of France*, Robert Gildea examines how different political cultures in France have supported different versions of the past as a means of defining their vision of France and of strengthening their

own identity. Each group has struggled to make its interpretation the universally accepted history, thereby legitimizing its claim to power and strengthening its identity. Equally, each culture has sought to control the commemoration — “the sacralization of its triumphs and defeats, its heroes and martyrs...” — of historic events as a means of defining the collective memory, establishing consensus and legitimating its claims to direct the destiny of France.¹ The identities which the different groups have promoted have not been static, but have been modified to take account of new situations and to maintain their legitimacy.

Gildea holds that political cultures are not defined by sociological factors such as race or class but by collective memory, “the collective construction of the past by a given community.” Collective memory is based on the common experiences of a lived history, not a learned history. The past preserved by the collective memory “is constructed not objectively but as a myth, in the sense not of fiction, but of a past constructed collectively by a community in such a way as to serve the political claims of that community.”² Different communities within the same state will have different, often conflicting, collective memories of the same events which they experienced from different perspectives.

In Canada, as in France, there are many contrasting versions of the past — French/English, newcomer/native, and centre/region — to name only the most obvious. Each of these competing interpretations may be viewed as an attempt by a specific community to define its identity in Canada, and, so far as it is within its power, to have its version of the Canadian past accepted as the dominant version. The contest to define the collective memory is typically presented in terms of a search for historic truth or for greater understanding of the Canadian character, but the interpretation adopted clearly affects the competing political claims of different communities in Canada. In the case of western Canada, the debate over whether the events of 1885 were an unjustified rebellion against lawful authority which threatened the future of Canada or a justified resistance by Aboriginal nations against a distant, unresponsive, and illegitimate government is linked to political, legal and emotive issues — regional autonomy, land claims, Aboriginal rights, and the bilingual, multicultural nature of Canada — which are still current.

Gildea writes that commemoration, which he defines as “remembering in common,” is central to the formation of collective memory.³ Not surprisingly there is often lively competition to control the messages conveyed by commemoration and incorporated in the collective memory. In Canada, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) has played a leading role in the formal commemoration of Canadian history and, consequently, in the creation of Canada’s collective memory.

The Board was established in 1919 to identify and commemorate events, people and places of national historic significance. In its current incarnation, it is primarily an advisory body; its recommendations must be approved by the minister of Canadian Heritage and are implemented by Parks Canada, an agency of the federal government. The interpretations put forward by the Board and implemented by Parks Canada are sometimes viewed as an authorized version of Canadian history, but they have seldom been uncontested. The most common form of commemoration is by the erection of a bronze plaque. Although bronze plaque texts may have the appearance of a final and authoritative statement on any subject, they have proven surprisingly malleable and subject to change.

This article will focus on the evolving interpretation of a number of sites associated with the events of 1885 in western Canada which have been identified by the Board and interpreted by Parks Canada. It will argue that the events, known to successive generations as the Second Riel Rebellion, the 1885 North West Rebellion, the Uprising of 1885, and the 1885 Resistance, have gone through three generations of interpretation within the Parks Canada system. First commemorated in the 1920s they were originally seen as part of Canada's westward drive to become a transcontinental nation. This interpretation was hotly debated in the 1920s but remained substantially unchanged until the early 1950s, when it was replaced by an interpretation which gave some recognition to the Indigenous People who resisted this expansion. In the 1970s a third interpretational generation began to emerge which, while not abandoning the theme of Canadian expansion, placed considerable emphasis on the societies which this expansion displaced. Using Parks Canada public and internal documents, published history, and public commentary, this paper will trace the evolution in the interpretation of the 1885 sites from the 1920s to the present. It will set this evolution within the contexts of the Canadian government's Aboriginal policy and cultural policy, the growth of regionalism in Canada, the evolution of Canadian historiography, and evolving heritage policy within Parks Canada. Although the Board has commemorated at least 16 places, events, and persons related to the events of 1885,⁴ it has lavished its attention on three key sites: Batoche, Cut Knife Hill and Fort Battleford (Figure 1). The three sites may be taken as representing three aspects (Métis, Native, and English-speaking Euro-Canadian) of the events of 1885.

Parks Canada's commemoration of the sites associated with the 1885 conflict has drawn the attention of historians before. C.J. Taylor's *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Canada's National Historic Parks and Sites* provides an analysis of the history and the interaction of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board and of the National Parks Branch (the predecessor of Parks Canada) in the years prior to 1965, while his "Some Early Problems of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada" includes a detailed study of the initial controversy which arose out of the commemoration of the 1885 sites. While admitting that the Board's structure, with regional representatives, provided for regional views on Canadian history, he argued that most of the original Board's members assumed the existence of a common national history. Their experience with the 1885 sites may not have destroyed this assumption, but it "demonstrated that the national perspective depended to a large degree on where one stood," and that national significance was a "very elastic term."⁵ Walter Hildebrandt has faulted both the Board and Parks Canada for imposing a central Canadian myth on the interpretation of Fort Battleford National Historic Park, and for ignoring both Native and settler history in the Battleford area.⁶ More recently Frits Pannekeok has castigated the Board and Parks Canada for adhering to a nationalist storyline in interpreting its sites and for failing to embrace the post-modern concept of multiple narratives in its interpretation sites such as Batoche and Fort Battleford.⁷ This article will not challenge the contention that the Board began with a strong central Canadian, or perhaps a traditional Canadian nationalist, interpretation of the events of 1885. It will suggest that both the Board and Parks Canada began to adopt an interpretation which was much more sympathetic to regional perspectives in the 1950s, and that this sympathy has continued to evolve so that in one case, Batoche, the regional interpretation is now dominant. It will also argue that,

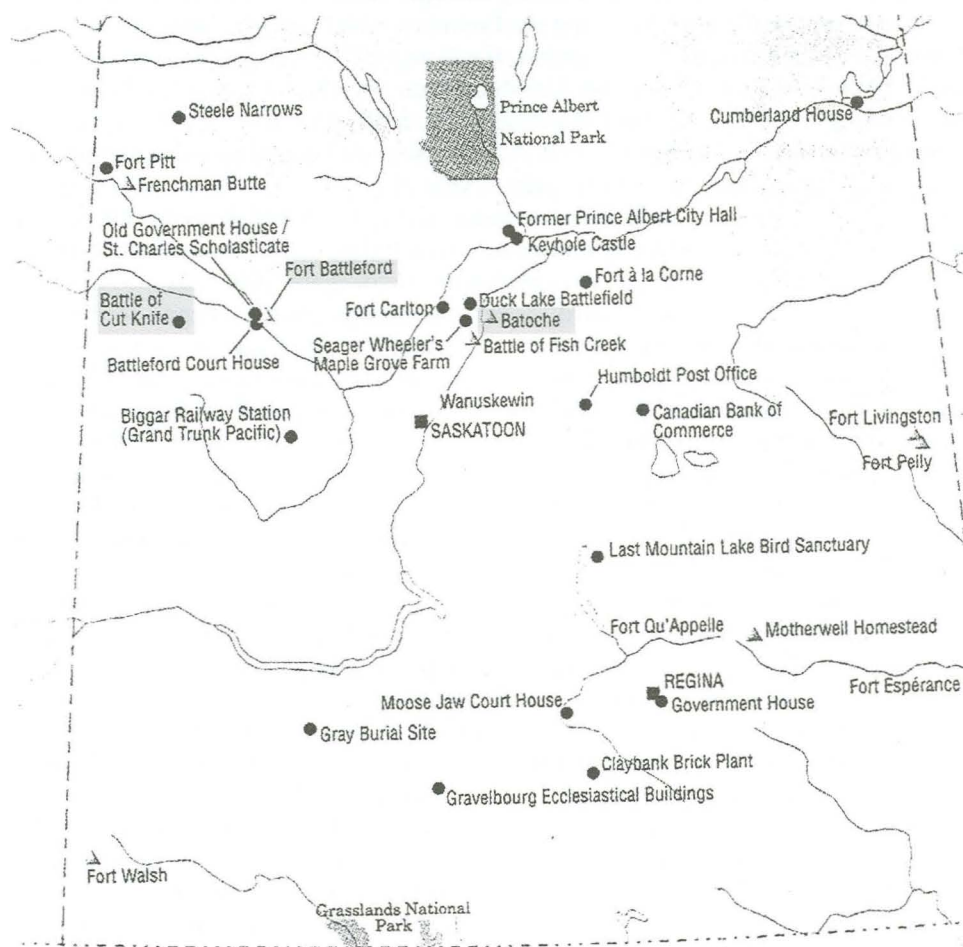


Figure 1. National Historic Sites and National Parks in Saskatchewan (Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada, *Canada's National Historic Sites and Parks. Atlas*, March 1996).

in the case of Batoche, Parks Canada has attempted to implement, with limited success, the concept of multiple narratives. The paper will also consider, at least by inference, the role of a national heritage agency such as Parks Canada in framing a national history.

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada was established in 1919 and given the responsibility of advising the Canadian government on the commemoration of sites of national historic significance. The creation of the Board came at the end of several decades of growing interest in Canadian history and in conservation both of natural and cultural resources. The two developments met in a movement to commemorate Canada's past through the preservation of historic landmarks. Although the move to commemoration and preservation was nationalist in inspiration, the nationalism took various regional forms — a celebration of

the Loyalist/Imperialist tradition in Ontario and of the French-Canadian tradition in Québec, and a more diffuse celebration of the very early origins of European settlement in the Maritime provinces.⁸ World War I intensified the movement towards conservation in Canada and, especially in English Canada, brought earlier diffuse national sentiment together. The Board members (E.A. Cruikshank, James Coyne, B. Sulte, W.C. Milner, and W.O. Raymond) who were appointed in 1919 all had some experience of the earlier preservation movement. They were historians, heritage activists and nationalists, and their early recommendations reflect the English-language "nation building" historiography of the time.

Although it was nominally an advisory body, in practice the Board operated as a semi-autonomous agency under the National Parks Branch (NPB) of the Department of the Interior. The Commissioner of National Parks, James Harkin, played an active role in the Board's decisions and the NPB implemented the Board's recommendations, but, until the 1950s, the Board's recommendations were seldom subject to political review.⁹ Moreover, the Board had almost no support staff; generally speaking, members researched topics and drafted plaque texts themselves or enlisted the support of experts in the field. As a result the early commemorations, which set the tone of the commemoration program for half a century, were reflective of the members' interests and approach to history. From 1919 to 1939 Brigadier General E.A. Cruikshank, an authority on the War of 1812, was the chairman of the Board. Under his influence early recommendations focussed on political and military history and on European exploration of Canada. Overall, the sites selected contributed to the "nation building" theme of Canadian history.

The rationale for establishing a system of national historic sites was not spelled out when the Board was created. It might be inferred from the context of the time that commemoration was intended both as a means of expressing and maintaining a Canadian nationalism. Certainly the chairman saw the Board's role as patriotic and didactic. The Board's principal form of commemoration was through bronze plaques mounted on stone monuments. Cruikshank favoured plaque texts which were brief and "factual"; they provided little overt interpretation or context and did not attempt to tell the whole story. Cruikshank hoped that the texts would inspire the reader's interest and curiosity; he did think it useful to include details, especially names, as a means of inspiring local interest.¹⁰

With the exception of Benjamin Sulte, a noted Québec historian, the original Board was Anglophone. Sulte died in 1923 and was succeeded by Victor Morin, a Montréal notary, active in the Québec heritage movement and president of the Montréal Antiquarian and Numismatic Society. He resigned after the Board refused to adopt his suggestion that all plaques, not just those in Quebec, should be bilingual. Three successors resigned in turn with the result that there was no effective voice on the Board for a French-speaking, Catholic interpretation of Canadian history during the 1920s when the 1885 sites were commemorated. As well, there were no members from the Prairie provinces until 1937. The British Columbia member, Judge F.W. Howay, who was appointed in 1923, generally spoke for western sites. A leading historian of British Columbia, he was not an expert on the Prairies and frequently consulted A.S. Morton, a fur trade historian at the University of Saskatchewan, on the 1885 sites. Howay also provided some balance to Cruikshank's enthusiasm for central Canadian military sites.¹¹

Initial Commemoration and Interpretation

At its first meeting in 1919 the Board identified a provisional list of 171 Canadian sites which it hoped to commemorate; in eastern Canada the list was dominated by military sites, with a smaller group of exploration and settlement sites. Twenty-eight commemorations were proposed for western Canada with the emphasis on fur trade sites. Four battlefields from the 1885 Rebellion — Batoche, Cut Knife Hill, Duck Lake, and Fish Creek — were the most significant block of non-fur-trade sites. In 1920 the Board recommended that the 1885 sites be treated as a whole, and over the next few years other sites (Frog Lake, Frenchman Butte, Battleford) were added to the list. In 1923 Judge Howay drafted plaque texts for Batoche, Fish Creek, Frog Lake, Cut Knife Hill, and Battleford. Overall, the drafts and the final products focused, in each case, on the action and took the point of view of the Canadian forces. Howay had his texts reviewed by E.H. Oliver of Presbyterian College, Saskatoon,¹² by the other Board members and then, at the suggestion of Cruikshank, by Sir William Otter. Otter had commanded the Canadian forces at the Battle of Cut Knife Hill, where they were defeated by the Cree under the leadership of Poundmaker and Fine Day.

The Board members did not make any substantial changes to the drafts, although James Coyne of Ontario did make the revealing comment that he was not sure that the Board should advertise the “retreat of Col. Otter [from Cut Knife Hill] and the victory of Dumont [at Fish Creek]. In similar cases heretofore we have contented ourselves with honouring our own soldiers or citizens who fell.”¹³ However, Otter substantially re-wrote the Cut Knife Hill text, with the result that it implied that the battle had been a victory for the Canadian forces under his command. At the time even Howay deferred to Otter’s view.¹⁴

The monuments were erected in 1924 and unveiled in the summer of 1925. Almost immediately they were involved in a storm of controversy. Indeed, during the unveiling ceremony the Roman Catholic Vicar-General of Prince Albert denounced the Batoche plaque as a “gross insult to the men who fought under Riel,” and a delegation from Québec boycotted the ceremony.¹⁵ The Vicar-General’s charge was widely reported in English language papers and was endorsed by many French language papers. *Le Soleil* of Québec City wrote: “On a fait du monument un mémorial à la prussienne; c’est au milieu d’un peuple vaincu le souvenir de l’écrasement par les vainqueurs, sans le moindre égard pour le ressentiment des familles métisses.”¹⁶ ‘L’affaire Batoche’ became a major embarrassment for the Board.

The Batoche text (Figure 2) was a straightforward presentation of an English and central Canadian view of 1885. It named General Middleton and the Canadian government units which participated in the battle, but did not deign to identify Louis Riel or Gabriel Dumont or to mention the Métis forces.

The monument was in front of the church at Batoche, on land which had been donated by the church. Harkin had written the Roman Catholic Bishop of Prince Albert in 1924, asking him to donate a plot for the monument and enclosing a photo of the plaque. The bishop responded that he would be pleased to transfer the land, provided that the monument respected the “sensibilities of the people” among whom it was to be erected and that it be in French as well as in English. Harkin thanked him for providing the site and remarked that although the plaque

had already been cast in English, he was favourably disposed to having a separate plaque cast in French.¹⁷ When Howay learned of the bishop's request for a bilingual plaque he wrote that he was "utterly opposed" to putting up a plaque in French; to do so in the West would, he predicted, lead to trouble.¹⁸ The Board deferred preparing a French language plaque, and only the English text was available at the time of the unveiling. This, together with the reference to the Métis as rebels, was taken as a double violation of the agreement with the bishop, who asked that a new plaque, with no reference to rebels or rebellion be prepared. The bishop also objected to the plaque on the grounds that it implied that the clergy had supported the rising.¹⁹ This last point serves as a useful reminder that the positions of the clergy and of the Métis were not identical, although the Board treated the clergy as intermediaries for the Métis.

At its 1926 meeting the Board declined to change the English text "in the interests of historical accuracy," while recommending that a French language text be prepared.²⁰ There was little chance of a French language text being accepted while the offending English language text remained unchanged. By 1929 the plaque had been defaced with "certain words" chiselled off,²¹ but it remained in place until 1939.

The controversy was extended to other sites by W.A. Kennedy. A prominent journalist, Kennedy had been present at the Battle of Cut Knife Hill as a war correspondent for the *New York Herald*. He had been on the speakers' platform at the unveiling of the plaques; it particularly irked the Board members that he had not criticized the plaques at the time of the unveiling but raised the issue later in newspaper columns under headlines such as "The Comedy of the Cairns" and "Blunders in Bronze." He echoed the bishop's criticism of the plaque at Batoche for being in English only and for using the words *rebellion* and *rebels* in a French-speaking, Roman Catholic, Métis community peopled by descendants of the Métis who had participated in the 1885 rising. At Cut Knife Hill he criticized the text (Figure 3) for being inaccurate — the battle had been a Canadian defeat, not a victory as the text implied — and for being in the wrong place. At Frog Lake, where the text (Figure 4) began "Here on 2 April 1885 rebel Indians under Big Bear massacred...", Kennedy argued that Big Bear had tried unsuccessfully to stop the massacre and that Wandering Spirit was the aggressive leader.

The Battleford plaque (Figure 5), which began, "Sacked by rebel Cree Indians under Poundmaker," showed, he wrote, "an astonishing looseness of language."²² Poundmaker had no "autocratic powers," he had been overridden by his more "ignorant and excitable" followers, and "sack" was an inaccurate description for the looting which occurred. Kennedy accepted that the Métis and Indians had been rebels (he did not consider the term one of opprobrium, and referred to his own

NORTH WEST REBELLION
BATOCHÉ
HEADQUARTERS OF THE
REBELS

Its capture by General
Middleton, after four days
fighting, 9th, 10th, 11th
and 12th May, 1885, ended
the rebellion.

The Midland Regiment,
10th Royal Grenadiers,
90th Regiment, Winnipeg
Battery, "A" Battery
Boultons Mounted Infan-
try, and French's Scouts
took part in the battle.

Figure 2. 1924 Batoche plaque text (NAC, RG84, Vol.979, File BA2, Part 1, photograph, c. 1923-34).

NORTH WEST REBELLION
CUT KNIFE BATTLEFIELD

Site of fight, 2nd may 1885
between government troops
under Lieut. Col. W.D. Otter
and Indian rebels under Chief
Poundmaker whose junction with
another rebel, Chief Big Bear, it
was desirable to frustrate.

After an engagement of six
hours when this object had been
attained Lt. Col. Otter returned
to Battleford with a loss of eight
killed and fourteen wounded.

Figure 3. Text unveiled in 1924 at Cut Knife (NAC, RG84, HS 10-3-4, Part 1, Brass Rubbing, c.1923-24).

Scottish ancestors who had been rebels in '45) and that once it began, it was necessary to suppress the rebellion. However, he emphasized that the rebellion need never have happened if western development had not been so ineptly mismanaged by the federal government.

Kennedy's columns, which appeared in the *Toronto Globe*, in the *Mail and Empire*, and in the *Calgary Herald*, were picked up and commented upon in other papers. The *Ottawa Journal* remarked that the inaccuracy in the Cut Knife Hill plaque was "inexcusable."²³ Kennedy was active in the Canadian Authors Association and he was probably responsible for the resolution passed at its Calgary meeting in 1929, which supported the Board's work but condemned inaccuracies in the texts, especially in Western plaques, and called for the appointment of

members from the Prairies.²⁴

In the case of the Cut Knife Battlefield plaque (Figure 3), erected on the Poundmaker Reserve, the population had not been consulted about the text, in spite of the fact that many veterans of the battle lived on the reserve. The population resented the text, but initially the Indian agent refused to support their protests out of deference to the HSMBC. When the accuracy of the texts became a public issue, the agent forwarded the Indians' protests to Ottawa. He wrote that the Indians claimed that "they were not rebels but were fighting for their rights and that Col. Otter retreated without attaining any object and in haste." They asked that the "Tablet should merely read that the monument was to commemorate the fight, stating names and date and omitting the objectionable features from the tablet."²⁵ The agent also noted that many old timers in the district (by which he probably meant white settlers) also resented the text; this view was supported by an independent report which noted that the Cut Knife Hill plaque had been defaced with the words "All lies."²⁶

A concern with historical accuracy, local pride, and the presence of many veterans of the battle on the Poundmaker's reserve is sufficient to explain the protest launched by the band. However, it is worth noting that the Poundmaker reserve was a centre of Native political activity in the 1920s and 1930s. The Chief, Fine Day, was both a veteran of the battle and an active and resourceful defender of his followers' rights, especially

NORTH WEST REBELLION
FROG LAKE MASSACRE

Here on 2nd April, 1885, rebel
Indians under
Big Bear massacred Rev. Father Léon Adélar
Fafard, O.M.I, Father Félix Marchand,
O.M.I, Indian Agent Thomas Quinn, Farm
Instructor John Delaney, John Alexander Gowanlock,
William Campbell Gilchrist, George Dill
Charles Gouin, John Willisroft.

Figure 4. Text of 1924 Frog Lake Massacre plaque (Parks Canada, Ottawa, "HSMBC Originals, Plaque Texts).

their right to practice their traditional religion. John Tootoosis, a member of the band, was the principal organizer for the League of Indians in Saskatchewan during the 1930s; the League is generally considered to be the first political umbrella group representing Canadian First Nations.²⁷

The Board was annoyed by the attacks and somewhat intimidated; for several years it viewed the 1885 sites as troublesome and to be avoided while there were less contentious topics to commemorate.²⁸ In 1930, when it was suggested that the site of Middleton's camp at Batoche should be protected, Howay wrote that the whole Batoche episode had been an unpleasant experience and that Batoche should be left to "fry in its own grease."²⁹ In the case of the Batoche, Battleford and Frog Lake plaques, the Board maintained that they were basically accurate and that Kennedy's criticisms were little more than nit-picking. The Cut Knife Hill plaque was more troubling. Howay accepted that it was in the wrong place and that it was inaccurate.³⁰ The error in locating the monument was explicable: it had been placed about a mile away from the actual site of the battle to make it more accessible by road. The error in the content of the text was more serious, and Howay pressed for a change; but the Ontario members, Cruikshank and Coyne, were reluctant to challenge the interpretation put forward by Sir William Otter. The Board debated the question at each of its annual meetings from 1927 to 1931. In an attempt to break the deadlock and to involve both more professional expertise and western opinion, it asked the heads of history departments in the three Prairie universities, A.L. Burt, A.S. Morton and Chester Martin, for drafts. It did not, so far as is known, consult with the First Nations. Finally in 1931 the Board agreed on a text which substituted the term "hostile Indians" for "Indian Rebels" and refrained from any suggestion that the Canadian force had accomplished its aims before it "retired to Battleford."³¹

This text was cast with the intention that it be erected in 1933, but the depression delayed action. In the meantime, George E. Lloyd, the Church of England bishop of Saskatchewan, took an interest in the plaque. He had been a chaplain to Canadian forces at the battle and he objected that the new text was "deliberately composed to spell 'defeat' without actually saying so."³² In 1935 Bishop Lloyd attended a reunion of Veterans of the North West Rebellion in Toronto which passed a resolution strongly condemning any change in the memorial at Cut Knife. The issue attracted some press coverage, and the powerful Toronto Conservative MP, Tommy Church, became involved. Speaking in the House of Commons, he supported the commemoration of the 1885 sites and spoke of the veterans of the North West Rebellion as men who went to the "northwest in 1885 to prevent this country from being dislocated and dismembered and to avenge the death of that great patriot, Thomas Scott."³³ Howay was asked to prepare a report in response to the veterans' resolution, and in 1936 the Board went to the unusual extent of reading into its minutes extensive extracts from standard histories to support its interpretation of

NORTH WEST REBELLION BATTLEFORD

Sacked by the Rebel
Cree Indians under
Poundmaker. Here
on 26th May, 1885, after
the Battle of Batoche
and the capture of Riel
Poundmaker and his
band surrendered to
General Middleton.

Figure 5. Text of 1924 Battleford plaque (NAC, RG84, Vol.1382, HS 10-3-6, Part 1, Brass Rubbing, c. 1923).

the battle. In spite of this brave front, the revised plaque was never erected. This failure may have been a response to the opposition from the veterans, but it was probably also a result of the loss of energy and sense of direction which the Board experienced in the mid 1930s. The original version of the Cut Knife Hill text remained in place until 1952.

With the exception of the admitted inaccuracies in the Cut Knife Hill text, the Board's view was representative of the mainstream English language historiography which had developed since 1885; essentially it ignored the possibility of the legitimacy of Métis and First Nations claims. This view was at odds with French language historiography, which tended to identify the Métis cause with the cause of French-speaking, Roman Catholic Québec and placed the 1885 Rebellion in a long line of confrontations including the Manitoba School Question, Bill 17 in Ontario, and conscription in World War I.

Shifting Personalities, Perspectives, and Interpretations

Kennedy's attack on the plaques revealed that there was a more nuanced interpretation of the rebellion current in English Canada and that the issue was more complex than the short, nationalist texts favoured by the Board were capable of dealing with. In a pamphlet, *The North-West Rebellions*, published by Ryerson Press in 1928, Kennedy mitigated Métis and Native responsibility in the rebellion. The federal government had "seemed deaf to all complaints" and in the early, non-violent stages, the protest had the support of some whites and of the Catholic clergy. At Frog Lake the most "savage" members of the band "set at naught their old chief Big Bear's" leadership, and Poundmaker was "practically a prisoner" in his camp. Above all, blame for the violent outcome was placed on Riel's shoulders. Kennedy's views were not simply an idiosyncratic interpretation; his pamphlet, which was aimed at school children, was recommended for use by the Ontario provincial department of education and was endorsed by the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire.³⁴

His position has some points in common with those of George Stanley, whose *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions* was published in 1936. Stanley saw the 1870 and 1885 rebellions as key events in the formation of a new region. This gave the risings legitimacy and shifted interpretation away from emphasis on the English/French conflict to a centre/periphery issue. Stanley also emphasized the rebellions as struggles between old and new ways of life, between "primitive and civilized peoples."³⁵ Stanley's work was not widely disseminated in the 1930s, but it was reissued in 1960 and became, for a time, the most widely accepted interpretation of the rebellions in English language historiography.

Changes in the Board's personnel and the active interest of local historians prepared the ground for a substantial shift in interpretation at the 1885 sites. In 1936 T.A. Crerar, a Manitoba MP, became the minister responsible for the Board. Crerar was first elected to Parliament in 1921 as a member of the Progressive Party, a regionally based party. Although he subsequently joined the Liberal Party, his western loyalties may have influenced his decision in 1937 to appoint Board members representing Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The Manitoba member, Father Antoine D'Eschambault, was a Roman Catholic priest, an active member of the Saint Boniface Historical Society, and a recognized historian. J.A. Gregory, a businessman and politician, was appointed to represent Saskatchewan. During Crerar's

ministry, Gustave Lanctôt, a leading historian of French Canada, was appointed to the Board, *ex officio*, in his position as Dominion Archivist. He effectively replaced E.A. Cruikshank, who died in 1939. Howay, who had drafted the original texts, retired in 1944. This left only one member on the Board, J.C. Webster of New Brunswick, who had been associated with the early controversies.

Gregory, the member of the Board for Saskatchewan, was a long-time mayor of North Battleford, a Liberal MLA (1934–40), and the MP (1940–45) for the Battlefords. As an MLA in 1938 he had spoken at length in the legislature on Métis' history and on their right to some consideration from the government; his speech was published in pamphlet form under the title "Metis Claims." The speech, unusual for its time, indicated a sympathy for the Métis which may have made him amenable to reconsidering the Board's interpretation of Batoche.³⁶

In 1939 the plaque which had given such offense at Batoche was taken down. In another decision which suggests an increased responsiveness to other voices, the Board recommended in 1943 that the new plaque at Duck Lake should be in Cree syllabics as well as English. Given that only twenty years before the Board had resisted putting French on the Batoche plaque, this was a substantial concession. In 1943 Father D'Eschambault was asked to consult with clergy at Batoche on the text for a new plaque there. Father Allard at Batoche consulted with his parishioners, who agreed to a draft text, in French and English, which was subsequently approved by the Board. The new text avoided the use of the word *rebel* and in fact avoided any attempt to explain the significance of the battle. The plaque (Figure 6) was placed on the old monument in the summer of 1947. There was no ceremony; it was simply left with the parish priest who had it put in place. While this surrender to local sentiment, which had opposed the original plaque, may not have been gracious, it was an indication that the Board was willing to consider other views in preparing plaque texts.

Over the next five years there was a concerted campaign waged by local interests to expand NHS involvement at both Batoche and Battleford. In 1947 the Board agreed to consider the care of soldiers' graves at Batoche. In 1948 Walter Tucker, a Saskatchewan MLA and leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party, began to pepper the NPB with letters urging that something be done to preserve the trenches of Middleton's encampment which were on Alfred Caron's farm at Batoche. Gregory, the board member, visited Fish Creek and Batoche with Tucker and found that Caron was willing to sell the site. Gregory also remarked that there was a granite memorial in the Batoche cemetery with the names of the Métis and Indians who had died there, including Louis Riel. He suggested that perhaps enough time had passed that the government might undertake to care for the graves of "these misguided people."³⁷ In 1950 the Prince Albert Historical Society

Batoche

Here, on the 15th May, 1885, after four days of fighting, the Métis under Louis Riel surrendered to General Middleton commanding the Canadian troops.

Ici, le 15 mai 1885, après quatre jours de combat, les Métis sous Louis Riel se rendirent au Général Middleton, commandant des forces canadiennes.

Figure 6. 1947 plaque text (Parks Canada Ottawa Office, "Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Originals. Plaque Texts." Compiled c.1973).

urged NHS to set aside the Batoche battlefield as a historic site; and in the debate on supply, two Saskatchewan Members of Parliament, J.H. Harrison and J.G. Diefenbaker, spoke in favour of preserving the 1885 sites. In 1950 the Board recommended that the trenches at Middleton's camp were of national significance and should be acquired. Negotiations to purchase the land began almost immediately. While they were going on, the priest at Batoche proposed that the government should buy the presbytery at Batoche for use as a museum, or, he suggested, NHS might buy the presbytery, the cemetery and the church and establish a substantial historic park. He remarked that the Métis resented the fact that the government was buying Middleton's campsite, which could be used to interpret the role of the government forces, and felt that their side of the story should be told as well.³⁸ Calculated or not, the remark played to the Board's willingness to give a more balanced interpretation to the Batoche site.

At the same meeting at which it recommended that Middleton's trenches should be acquired, the Board established a committee to review all of the 1885 sites. Father D'Eschambault and Campbell Innes, a local historian and heritage activist from Battleford who replaced Gregory on the Board in 1951, completed the review in May of 1952. They reported that the causes of the "events of 1885" were complex, and that it was "too simple to say it was a struggle between the ancient way of life, the border line and frontier existence and the incoming civilization." Responsibility "at least in greater part" was attributed to the "callous indifference and the later blundering of the Canadian authorities." They also reported that there was widespread support from the white community in the initial stages of the events. The report recommended the acquisition of the Batoche rectory, the Métis trenches at Batoche, and the Indian trenches at Frenchman Butte. The report also suggested a new interpretive framework, stating that "So far only the military operations have been given importance and consideration. Justice should be done to all participants in these tragic events which should be considered as a whole."³⁹

While the report was in preparation, the prime minister, Louis St. Laurent, intervened in the debate over the interpretation of the events of 1885. St. Laurent was a French-Canadian, a Roman Catholic, a Liberal, and an heir to the tradition of Sir Wilfrid Laurier who had taken up the defence of Riel and of the Métis in the aftermath of the rising. During a tour of Saskatchewan in August 1951, St. Laurent met Walter Tucker, the leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party, who told him of the "trouble" he had experienced with the Board over the wording of the plaque at Batoche. Subsequently St. Laurent visited the museum at Fort Battleford, which had been transferred from a local historical society to the National Parks Branch in July of 1951. There, St. Laurent found "'rebels' and 'rebellion' splashed all over the place." Speaking with "intense feeling" he told J.D. Herbert, who was in charge of the museum:

that the word "rebellion" was unfortunately chosen to describe the events of 1885 because the people involved on both sides of the affair were equally interested in the democratic process and in the interests of national unity which he and a great many others had been striving a long time to further, [and thus] he felt that the word rebellion should be dropped and should be properly referred to as simply an uprising.⁴⁰

He went on to quote Sir Wilfrid Laurier as saying that the Métis "wanted to be

treated like British subjects and not bartered away like common cattle," and that in 1885 they had been driven to crime by the government. St. Laurent declared that he would "take official steps to have the half-breed actions on the prairies in the last century referred to as an 'uprising' and not a 'rebellion'."⁴¹

St. Laurent's comments evoked a substantial press response. While some papers described his intervention as "rewriting history", others took the view that the rising was the result of government procrastination and that the Métis and Indians took up arms to "fight for some of the freedoms we Canadians have today." W.L. Morton, a historian of Manitoba and western Canada, agreed with St. Laurent in the broad political sense while pointing out that legally, the uprising was a rebellion.⁴²

On his return to Ottawa, St. Laurent wrote to the minister responsible for the HSMBC, expanding on his remarks and suggesting that the Board might wish to consider his point of view. St. Laurent eloquently placed the events of 1885 in both a large and a small "L" liberal context:

I have always looked upon as Toryism the application of condemnatory terms to those, who, after all, have been largely responsible for the free institutions we now enjoy. I don't think of the Bishops and Barons at Runnymede [as rebels] nor do I think this of others who secured all the great charters, no not even William Lyon Mackenzie and Neilson and Papineau. As a matter of fact, you know, there are a great many Canadians of my race and religion who resent as cowardly the conduct of Sir John A. Macdonald and his government in allowing Riel to be hanged. I think we should be false to the attitudes so eloquently maintained in the House of Commons by Sir Wilfrid Laurier if we countenanced the continuation of inscriptions in a public museum that endorses the attitude then taken by the Macdonald government.⁴³

The Prime Minister's intervention reinforced, and probably helped to shape, the recommendations in D'Eschambault and Innes' report on the 1885 sites, and in 1952 the Board agreed that the use of the term *rebellion* was "unwise."⁴⁴ The Board had already begun to move in the direction it was being pushed: in rewriting the Batoche plaque text in 1947 and the Cut Knife Battlefield text in 1951 it had avoided the use of the words *rebels* and *rebellion*. The exhibits at Fort Battleford, which had attracted St. Laurent's attention, were the responsibility of the National Parks Branch and the Board; but it seems likely that they had been developed by the local historical society, which had transferred the museum to the federal government only a month before St. Laurent's visit.

The report by D'Eschambault and Innes, the intervention by the prime minister, and the transfer of the museum at Fort Battleford to National Parks set the stage for the 1952 recommendation by the Board that the Batoche rectory was of national historic significance and should be acquired for use as a museum. The rectory was bought in 1955 and the church in 1970. By 1976 Parks Canada had acquired about 2,700 acres of land including the site of the village of Batoche, and was preparing to develop Batoche as a major historic site in western Canada.

In 1952 the Board replaced the original Cut Knife Hill plaque. As was the case at Batoche, the Board sought the prior approval of the local Aboriginal population in replacing the plaque. Unlike the case at Batoche, where the clergy acted as intermediaries for the Métis, the Aboriginal population at Cut Knife Hill was consulted directly. Thomas Favel, the chief at Poundmaker, gave permission for a monument

CUT KNIFE BATTLEFIELD

Named after Chief Cut Knife of the Sarcee in an historic battle with the Cree. On 2nd May, 1885, Lt. Col. W.D. Otter led 325 troops composed of North West Mounted Police, "B" Battery, "C" Company, Foot Guards, Queen's Own and Battleford Rifles, against the Cree and Assiniboine under Poundmaker and Fine Day. After an engagement of six hours, the troops retreated to Battleford.

Figure 7. Text unveiled in 1952 (NAC, RG84, Vol.1381, HS 10-3-4, Part 3, Blue print c.1951, T-14149).

to be erected on the battle-field and agreed to participate in the unveiling ceremony on the understanding that a new text would be prepared.⁴⁵

The new text was approved in 1951 and unveiled in 1952 (Figure 7). The 1952 text followed fairly closely what the members of Poundmaker's reserve had suggested in 1926. It named the commanders on each side, identified the government units and tribal peoples involved, and concluded that after six hours the government troops retreated to Battleford. There was no mention of rebellious or hostile Indians nor of Poundmaker's surrender. Equally the text avoided describing the battle as a Canadian defeat and avoided any discussion of the context of the battle, of the aims of the participants, or of the consequences of the battle. In its sparseness the text is similar to the 1947 text at Batoche; apparently the only common ground which the descendants of the participants in the 1885 battles could agree on were the dates and the names of those involved.

When the Board had replaced the old plaque at Batoche it had done so almost by stealth. By contrast, the unveiling of the Cut Knife Hill plaque was done with full press coverage and in the presence of the Governor-General. The ceremony, on November 2, 1952, was hosted and organized by the chiefs of Poundmaker, Sweet Grass and Little Pine Reserves, who issued an invitation to the descendants of the Canadian militia and Indian warriors to attend (Figure 8). Prayers were offered by

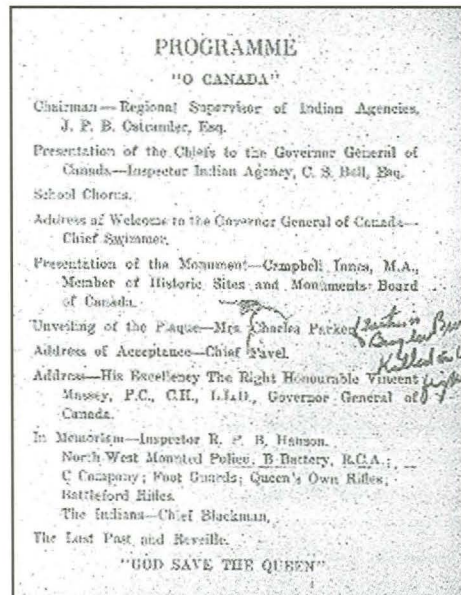
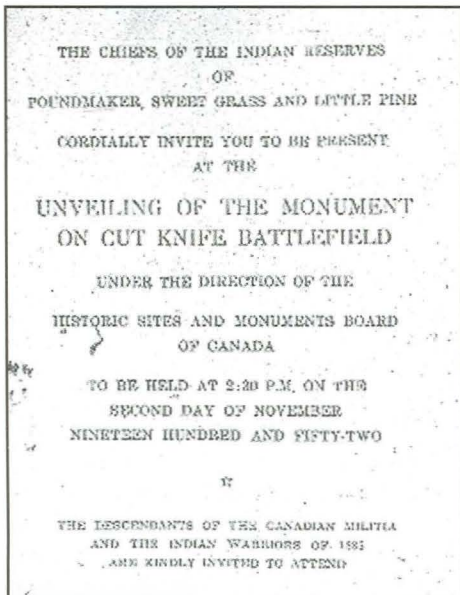


Figure 8. Cut Knife Hill Monument.

THE BATTLE OF CUT KNIFE

On May 2 1885, after the relief of Battleford, Col. W. D. Otter and a flying column of 305 men advanced on Poundmaker's reserve at Cut Knife where the Cree and Assiniboine bands of Battleford Agency were gathered. The surprise attack failed and after six hours fighting Otter retreated to Battleford. On Poundmaker's orders the Indians declined pursuit but, convinced of white hostility, moved to join Riel at Batoche. When word came of the Métis defeat there, Poundmaker and his bands surrendered at Battleford on May 26.

Figure 9. Text approved 1971; installed in 1985 (HSMBC, Minutes, May 1971).

a native catechist, Baptiste Pooyak, with a choir from the Little Pine Day School. The actual unveiling was done by Mrs. C. Parker, whose father, Paddy Bourke of the North-West Mounted Police, had been killed in the battle. The Governor-General, Vincent Massey, spoke at the ceremony and was quoted as saying there were "no truer Canadians anywhere" than "Her Majesty's Indian subjects."⁴⁶ Finally the names of those killed at the battle were read out by RCMP Inspector Hansen and by Chief Blackman. The front cover of the program bore an image of "Fine Day, General of the Indian Forces." The back cover had a cut of Major-General T.B. Strange, who had led a Canadian force in 1885 but who was not at Cut Knife Hill. Lieut.-Col. Otter, who had commanded the government forces in the battle, was not mentioned in the program. The shift in perspective which the new plaque and the ceremony represented was picked up in the newspaper headlines reporting the ceremony: "Cut Knife Hill battle saw Indians give pasting to white soldiers," and "History revised. Referees do a double-take and Poundmaker cops a hill."⁴⁷

The contrast between the profile given the replacement of the Batoche plaque in 1947 and the unveiling of the Cut Knife Hill plaque in 1952 can be seen both as an evidence of the evolution of the Board's views on the 1885 sites and the profile which St. Laurent's intervention and the acquisition of Fort Battleford as a national historic park had given historic sites in Saskatchewan. The prominence may also have been a recognition of the growing political sophistication of the Saskatchewan Native community and of the community on the Poundmaker reserve.

Unlike the sites at Batoche and Fort Battleford, Parks Canada has never owned any substantial property at Cut Knife and it has not developed a major interpretive program there. The site is on the Poundmaker Indian Reserve where the Poundmaker First Nation has established its own interpretation centre, the Chief Poundmaker Historical Centre and Teepee Village. There the events of 1885 are set in a broader history of the Cree People, including the story of how treaties were made and broken and how the Cree people preserved their traditions.⁴⁸

Although there appeared to have been a general acceptance of the Cut Knife text erected in 1952, a new text was drafted in 1971 and erected in 1985 (Figure 9). The new text (in Cree, English and French) is comparable in style to the 1954 text at Fort Battleford. It attempts to provide a narrative description of the event but it remains ambiguous as to causes, results and motives. Does, as I believe, its description of a "surprise" attack imply that Otter, representing the Canadian government, was the aggressor in the battle? Does the phrase "after the relief of Battleford"

FORT BATTLEFORD

Here in July, 1876, Superintendent James Walker established a post of the North West Mounted Police in the heart of the Cree country. "The Fort" grew to a strength of 200. during the uprising of 1885 it gave refuge to more than 400 people and was the base for operations at Cut Knife Hill and Fort Pitt leading to the surrender of Chief Poundmaker and the search for Big Bear. With the extension of settlement and mechanization of the Force it ceased to be the barracks in 1924.

Figure 10. 1954 plaque text (HSMBC, Minutes, May 1953).

make, as Parks Canada historian Frieda Klippenstein suggests, a "very subtle explanation and legitimization of Otter's attack"?⁴⁹ Should the phrase "convinced of white hostility, [Poundmaker's band] moved to join Riel at Batoche" be taken as meaning that Otter's attack was another instance of government action driving loyal Indians into rebellion? On one point, that Otter was defeated, the current text seems clear where earlier texts were opaque or inaccurate.

At Battleford there was no pressure to change the interpretation presented by the 1924 plaque, which made reference to the "sack" of Battleford. Perhaps this was because the predominantly white community accepted the interpretation as an accurate account of the events of the rebellion. There was, however, pressure for the NPB to become more involved in interpreting the history of Battleford: the community had an active local history society, which published a series of memoirs of early pioneers with a particular emphasis on the 1885 experience. The society's moving spirit, Campbell Innes, replaced J.A. Gregory on the Board in 1951. Innes was largely responsible for persuading the provincial government to fund the restoration of several buildings at the old North-West Mounted Police post for use as a local museum. Work on the restoration began in 1945, and the "North West Mounted Police Memorial and Indian Museum" was formally opened in 1948. The museum was managed by the historical society; it occupied five buildings and had exhibits on police history, Indian life, pioneer life, natural history, and agriculture.⁵⁰

The historical society hoped to gain the support of the Indian Affairs Branch and of the Board for the project. In 1947 the Board appointed a committee headed by J.A. Gregory to consider a proposal that the Indian Affairs Branch become involved in the museum. The committee suggested that a series of regional museums devoted to Indian culture should be developed, and in 1948 the Board endorsed this concept.⁵¹ Following a subsequent, and even more positive, report by the committee, the Board recommended the acquisition and operation of the museum by National Parks. As a result the museum was transferred to the federal government in 1951.

In 1953 the Board approved a plaque text for Fort Battleford (Figure 10). The text was not a replacement for the original "sack" of Battleford text erected in 1924 (Figure 5), which remained in place until at least 1962.⁵² The Fort Battleford text marked the acquisition of Fort Battleford as a national historic site. It focussed on the role of Fort Battleford as a police post, its place in the government's relations with the Cree Indians and in the events of 1885. The text represented a move to a new style which both commemorated and educated. It conveyed considerably more

information than had the recent texts at Batoche or Cut Knife Hill. The expansiveness of the Fort Battleford text also reflects the fact that the plaque was being erected in a community which generally shared the Board's preconceptions. It is not known to what extent the Board consulted with the people of Battleford in preparing the text; however, Campbell Innes, the driving force behind the development of Fort Battleford, was also the Saskatchewan member of the HSMBC and, if usual Board practice was followed, would have drafted the text which was erected in 1954.

The rewriting of the Batoche, Cut Knife Hill and Fort Battleford plaque texts marked a substantial shift in the Board's and the NPB's approach to the 1885 sites. This change was emphasized and confirmed in 1956, when the Board approved the commemoration of Louis Riel. The last lines of a plaque text to commemorate him (approved in 1964) indicate how far Riel had traveled since 1885 — "After being found guilty of treason he was hanged at Regina, November 16, 1885. Riel is recognized as one of the founders of the Province of Manitoba."⁵³ In subsequent years the Board recommended the recognition of Poundmaker (1967) and Big Bear (1971), Cree leaders who had been imprisoned for their role in 1885, and Gabriel Dumont (1981), Riel's military commander in 1885. The rewriting of the texts and the recognition of Aboriginal leaders gave the Aboriginal interpretation of the 1885 uprising a legitimacy which had not been present in the early plaque texts.

Evolving Historiography—Growing Regional Identity—Changes at Parks Canada

Superficially the shift in focus can be attributed to a change in personnel at the Board, and to the presence of active members from the Prairie provinces with a sympathy for a regional perspective on the events of 1885. At another level the change reflects evolving historiography, a growing regional identity, increased assertiveness on the part of Aboriginal people, and changes in the structure and approach of Parks Canada. Many of these changes were just becoming apparent in the 1950s, but they would become powerful trends during the 1960s and 1970s.

In the 1920s Howard Kennedy had suggested that there were legitimate grievances in western Canada which could explain but not excuse the Rebellion. George Stanley, writing in the 1930s, placed Riel and the Rebellions within a framework of regional protest and struggle between primitive and civilized peoples. Stanley's thesis was developed by Joseph K. Howard in *Strange Empire: The Story of Louis Riel*, published in 1952. Howard portrayed the Métis as romantic primitives struggling against a central government with Riel as their spokesman. Howard's work was less subtle than Stanley's; but it was more accessible and it fed into the growing counter-culture of the 1960s, which saw parallels in the anti-colonial struggle of the Métis in the nineteenth century and that of the Third World of the twentieth.⁵⁴

Stanley's view of Riel and the Métis as representatives of regional dissent was one which resonated with many historians and westerners. In 1948 H.C. Knox, in a letter to the editor of the *Winnipeg Tribune*, suggested that a statue should be erected to Riel as "the first man to fight for the recognition of the West and the rights of all Westerners."⁵⁵ Two years later when Charles Lightbody, a historian at the University of Saskatchewan, proposed that the government acquire Middleton's trenches at Batoche, he wrote: "This region is rapidly evolving a consciousness of a distinctive history and culture, within the framework of a developing national culture."⁵⁶

Western regionalism in historiography was exemplified in W.L. Morton's work. Morton was ultimately a Canadian nationalist, but he was also a leading regional historian and author of a study of the Progressive Party, a regional protest movement of the 1920s. He was able to sympathize with Riel and the Métis as regional voices while not accepting their specific goals or methods. The idea of regionalism as a framework of national history was legitimized by J.M.S. Careless. Writing in 1969, Careless was critical of the "nationbuilding" approach to Canadian history which, he suggested, "may tell us less about the Canada that now is than the Canada that should have been..."⁵⁷ As an alternative he suggested that Canadian history could be viewed as the articulation of limited identities based primarily on regions within one transcontinental state. Careless became a member of the HSMBC in 1972 and served as chairman from 1981 to 1985. His appointment in 1972 was symbolic of changing philosophy in Canadian historiography, and on the Board, for he succeeded Donald Creighton, who saw Canadian history as a story of nationbuilding centred in the St. Lawrence valley.

Riel's rehabilitation continued in the 1960s and 1970s when he was made to serve as a symbol for the French language in western Canada, at a time when bilingualism was being established as a national policy. In his role as a regional symbol he was acceptable to white and Aboriginal westerners, French and English-speaking. In Manitoba he was acknowledged as the founder of the province with a heroic statue on the grounds of the legislature; another statue in Regina recognized his place in the history of Saskatchewan. In 1978 the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan (AMNIS) asked that he be pardoned, as he had been driven to rebellion by the government; within a few years AMNIS withdrew this request, arguing that Riel, and the Métis, had done nothing wrong and therefore did not need a pardon. More recently Riel has been spoken of as a Father of Confederation — a member of the Canadian pantheon along with his nemesis, Sir John A. Macdonald. Riel has not been without his detractors, most notably Thomas Flanagan who focused on Riel's religious millenarian beliefs and mental instability. Flanagan places much of the blame for the rebellion on Riel's shoulders; moreover, he argues that the rebellion could not be justified in liberal democratic theory. In spite of his flaws, Riel became, in Douglas Owsen's words, "one of Canada's special losers," comparable to Papineau and Mackenzie.⁵⁸

The Métis cause was not identical with Riel, but it benefited from his rehabilitation. Beginning with Marcel Giraud's *Le Métis Canadien* in 1945, scholars began to look at the Métis not merely as participants in two failed risings but as a "new people" or nation. This approach blossomed in the 1970s and 1980s with a number of studies of Métis communities which were based in social rather than political history. One which was especially relevant to Batoche NHS was Diane Payment's *Batoche, 1870-1910* (St. Boniface: Éditions du Blé, 1983). Payment was a Parks Canada historian employed in the Prairie Regional Office, and the book was one of the products of her research towards the development of the Batoche NHS. Payment argued that the Métis were adapting relatively well to changed economic circumstances after 1870 and that the defeat at Batoche, although a setback, did not spell the end of the community or of the Métis people. Although she accepted that the Métis of Saskatchewan were a "people," she recognized that they were not monolithic and that not all Métis supported Riel.⁵⁹ Payment's work and that of others reinforced the view that the Métis were a "nation" comparable to the Cree or Blackfoot; this

view received legal support in 1982 when the Canadian constitution recognized the Métis as Aboriginal people.

Riel and the Métis came to be viewed as representatives of the Aboriginal people and of their struggle to survive against the advance of Canadian society. This role linked 1885 to the growing Aboriginal rights debates of the 1970s and to the growing assertiveness of Native people. In 1945 the United States government had established an Indian Claims Commission to adjudicate native claims and, during the 1950s and 1960s, the Canadian government, in the face of an increasingly active Aboriginal population, considered establishing a similar commission. Then in 1969 the new Trudeau government launched its white paper on Indian Affairs which proposed a radical restructuring of native/non-Native relations. The white paper proposed winding up the Department of Indian Affairs and essentially ending the special status which natives enjoyed or suffered under. This proposal was rejected by Native leaders and seems to have inspired them to a more determined pursuit of their interests. In 1973 the case of *Calder vs. Attorney General of British Columbia* forced the federal government to accept the possibility that some form of Aboriginal title might be recognized by the courts and that negotiation of such claims could no longer be avoided. In 1974 the Office of Native Claims was created to coordinate these claims.⁶⁰ As well as legitimizing the Native point of view, the office helped to fund extensive research on native history as it related to claims. Although this research was tailored towards the requirements of the legal system, it expanded the base for Aboriginal history in western Canada. Finally, the repatriated Canadian constitution of 1982 recognized and enshrined Aboriginal rights, without defining them.

During the 1950s both the structure and philosophy of NPB and of the Board began to change in ways which affected how national historic sites were identified, commemorated and interpreted. The Board's recommendation that the sites at Battleford and Batoche be acquired was unusual and indicative of the change. Through the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s the Board and National Historic Sites operated as a small, underfunded organization. Board members researched subjects and drafted plaque texts themselves. The Board's focus was on commemoration rather than preservation; it generally resisted any attempt to involve it in a site beyond the level of a plaque. Preservation (as opposed to commemoration) was not part of its philosophy. The Parks Branch did operate some sites such as Fort Anne and Fort Chambly, which it had owned since before the creation of the Board. It also became involved in the partial restoration of sites such as Louisbourg and Fort Prince of Wales during the 1930s, and undertook the reconstruction of the Port Royal Habitation. Although individual Board members were sometimes involved in these projects, the Board itself was not committed to them.⁶¹

Not all of the Board members were satisfied with its focus during its first three decades. Howay, the British Columbia member, was uneasy with the emphasis on military sites which tended to favour central Canada. On two occasions he suggested that a halt be called to additional commemorations of sites associated with the War of 1812. In 1943 he submitted a review of the Board's achievements and recommendations for its future. He noted the geographic and thematic imbalance in commemorations: of 285 sites, 105 commemorated battles and war; 97 were in Ontario and 63 were in Québec. There were only 8 sites in Saskatchewan. He suggested that more attention be paid to economic, social and cultural growth,

and that both distinctive and typical examples of Canadian buildings should be commemorated and preserved. The Board endorsed his report and although change was slow to come, it did come in the years following World War II.⁶²

The booming post-war economy made more money available for heritage and for culture in general. In 1949 the government appointed the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences. Known as the Massey Commission, it was directed to investigate and encourage cultural "institutions which express national feeling, promote common understanding and add to the variety and richness of Canadian life..."⁶³ The Commission viewed the HSMBC as a key federal heritage institution, and supported an expansion of its role with an increase in its funding. It criticized the program for being uneven, with too few sites on the prairies, and recommended a more active role in consulting with local heritage groups. The Commission also suggested that in addition to commemoration, the Board should pay more attention to preservation, in particular to the preservation of architecturally significant buildings. The Commission repeated some of the concerns expressed in Howay's report of 1943 and supported the preservation initiatives which had been emerging within the Parks Program before World War II. However, the Commission operated at a much higher level than the Board and its recommendations received the full attention of a government which, in the post-war boom, was increasingly active.

During the 1950s the NHS program expanded rapidly. New sites were acquired; restoration and reconstruction became more common; and interpretation programs, including museums, became more elaborate. The expansive atmosphere was exemplified by the massive reconstruction of Louisbourg in the 1960s; C.J. Taylor, who wrote a history of the Board, referred to the 1960s as the "Era of the Big Project." The development and interpretation of large sites such as Louisbourg, Dawson City, and, ultimately, Batoche and Fort Battleford, demanded a more expansive interpretation than had been provided by the Board's plaques. It also opened the possibility of broader social and economic interpretations of historic events, as opposed to the political and military interpretations which had been current in the pre-war period.

The era of the big project also required a larger, more complex organization. Initially Parks Canada established regional offices in Calgary and Québec City. In 1973 it established additional regional offices in Halifax, Cornwall and Winnipeg. These offices were a response to specific requirements of managing a larger system, but they were also a part of a general government program of decentralization designed to defuse regionalism, spread employment benefits, and deflect criticism of a distant government. By the late 1970s most Parks Canada regional offices had a full planning and development capability including the capability to undertake a complex program of historical research and interpretation. Some had also developed a regional perspective and viewed "Headquarters" in Ottawa with ambivalence. Although Headquarters continued to exercise a policy and review role in site development, the regional offices were powerful new influences on the development of historic sites. Their identification with regional perspectives should not be underestimated as a factor affecting the development and interpretation of sites.

The growth of the Parks Canada program also influenced the Board's relationship to the program and to its political masters. By 1950 the Board was in practice semi-autonomous: while it relied on the staff of National Parks to implement its

recommendations, the recommendations were approved neither by the bureaucrats nor by politicians. In the early 1950s the minister responsible for the Board became concerned about both the financial and political implications of the Board's activity. The incident, already described, in which Prime Minister St. Laurent took exception to the interpretation of the 1885 conflict at Fort Battleford, may have highlighted the political implications of historic sites. In 1952-53 the minister instituted administrative reforms and legislation which made it clear that the Board was only an advisory body. Its recommendations had to be approved by the minister before they came into effect and decisions as to how they were implemented were also in the minister's hands.⁶⁴

The Board's relationship to the staff of National Historic Sites also changed as the program expanded. As National Historic Sites developed expertise in historical research, archaeology, material culture and other disciplines, and the scale of commemorations expanded, the Board had a less immediate relationship to the interpretation of sites. Whereas in 1924 Howay and the Board had drafted and approved the plaque text for Batoche, in the 1970s a range of planners, interpreters, historians, archaeologists and curators had input into the planning of Batoche National Historic Site and Fort Battleford NHS. While the development of Batoche remained grounded in the Board's 1923 recommendation that "Batoche is a site of national importance" and in a few subsequent amplifications, there was much room to manoeuvre in determining why the site was important and how this importance was to be communicated to the public. All of these changes had an effect on how commemoration and interpretation developed at the 1885 sites in the second half of the twentieth century.

Fort Battleford

Both Batoche and Fort Battleford were to be developed as major historic sites with substantial investment in both preservation and interpretation. Fort Battleford had been developed as a museum by the local historical society, which in July of 1951 turned the site over to NHS. In making the transfer the museum board requested that the name and focus of the museum be retained. In particular it asked that the relics of the pioneers keep a prominent place at the site and that the Indian museum continue to interpret the life and customs of the Native people.⁶⁵ The name of the park was changed to Fort Battleford National Historic Site, but other changes were slow to come. A report dated about 1968 stated that the exhibits had remained basically unchanged for 20 years.⁶⁶ The Superintendent's house at the fort was being restored to the period 1875-89; the Officer's Quarters housed exhibits on the early history of the district and the Territorial Council (which had sat at Battleford from 1876 to 1883); the Sick Horse Stable had exhibits explaining the importance of the horse to the police; the Guard Room had exhibits on the Uprising; and the Mess Hall housed a lecture hall and exhibits of Indian artefacts.⁶⁷

New exhibits in the barracks and the refurbished commanding officer's residence were opened in 1969. Walter Hildebrandt, a historian of Fort Battleford who worked with the Prairie Regional Office in Winnipeg, argues that these exhibits, and the overall interpretation at Fort Battleford under Parks Canada's administration, present a "centralist" interpretation of Canadian history. In particular, he suggests, the role of the site as an "Indian Museum" suffered from an increased focus on the

nation-building role of the North West Mounted Police.⁶⁸ Certainly, both local and Native history became relatively less significant but they were not eliminated. The increased focus on the police force and the events of 1885 was only part of what the founders of the museum had planned, but it was in keeping with the intent of the Board as it was expressed in the Fort Battleford plaque erected in 1954 (Figure 10).

The intent of the Board was, and remains, a key element in what is now referred to as commemorative integrity. According to Parks Canada's *Guiding Principles and Operational Policies*, "A historic place ... may be said to possess commemorative integrity when the resources that symbolize or represent its importance are not impaired or under threat, when the reasons for its significance are effectively communicated to the public and when the heritage value of the place is respected."⁶⁹ The reasons for a site's significance are established by the HSMBC in the light of its own collective understanding of Canadian history, on the advice offered by staff, and, increasingly, on the basis of consultation with individuals, groups and communities with an interest in the commemoration. While communities and individuals may be consulted, the Board is ultimately responsible and is required to make its recommendations in terms of "national historic significance." National significance is largely defined on the basis of the Board's tradition and its collective sense of the Canadian reality. The Board's tradition has evolved and is evolving; the concept of national significance is not static.

In spite of the dynamic nature of national historic significance and of consultation with local communities, tension among national, regional and local perspectives is common at historic sites. This is especially the case at older sites, such as those of 1885, which were commemorated when a nation-building view of history was popular and when there was no consultation with the local communities. Most national historic sites are recognized by the Board because of their relationship with a specific event, phenomenon or person which the Board judges to be of national significance. It is typical — indeed it is a requirement of commemorative integrity — for commemoration and interpretation at a site to focus on the elements which the Board has identified as having national significance. Equally typically, at a major site, there will be pressure to expand the focus either to include other events or persons which are considered significant or to provide context to the primary focus. Often the pressure for change comes from community groups which wish to tell the history of their community, but it may also come from regional or national groups which have a different perspective on the site than that identified by the Board. At Batoche NHS, the Board has modified its initial focus on the military events of 1885 substantially, in response to evolving historiography and to local and regional interests.

Fort Battleford NHS has evolved differently. It began as a community-based museum with the role of telling the entire story of the community. When it became a national historic site in 1951 its focus was narrowed, fitting it within what the Board had identified as being of national historic significance and within a larger system of national historic sites dedicated to telling the story of Canada. Although the focus has since widened to include more information on Native history, the process has not gone as far as it has at Batoche. One might speculate that this is because Fort Battleford is located in a predominately Euro-Canadian community (with a large Native minority) which is relatively comfortable with the story of

Canadian expansion as represented by the North-West Mounted Police and Fort Battleford.

To the extent that a shift in focus towards the police theme represented a centralist focus, it had support from business interests in the local community. In 1957 the Battleford Board of Trade asked that the site be fully restored as a memorial to the police. The Board of Trade also suggested that the museum collection was of "secondary importance" and could be moved out of the Fort and housed in a rebuilt concert hall.⁷⁰ A decade later an editorial in the North Battleford *News-Optimist* declared that the site "should be operated less as a museum and more as a fort..." It should be restored as it was in 1885: "It is not enough to see the relics of an era... Fort Battleford needs some living Redcoats ... some Indian Braves." This, the newspaper declared, was what the tourists expected to see.⁷¹

What "tourists expected to see" was becoming increasingly important. It would be misleading to suggest that before 1950 the Board was indifferent as to whether or not the public stopped to read the plaques it erected: as we have seen, in 1924 the Cut Knife Hill plaque was erected some distance from the site of the battle so as to make it more accessible to the public. However, the consequences of public indifference to a commemoration were more visible and more costly as the scale of commemoration increased. Visitation statistics became one measure of a site's success, and visitor reaction, real or anticipated, influenced how a site was developed and interpreted. Consideration of visitor reaction may have led to caution in approaching controversial or unpopular interpretations at sites. More positively, it meant that interpretations presented at sites had to be aware of a wide range of valid views on the history of sites such as Batoche, Fort Battleford, or Cut Knife Hill. The expansion of the audience also affected the way in which sites were presented. Because both refurbished buildings, whether originals or reconstructions, and animated, as opposed to static, interpretation were popular with visitors, there was pressure to employ them. Finally, local communities (and quite possibly some heritage professionals) often favoured large-scale reconstructions and animated interpretation both as a tourist draw and as a source of employment. The "big project" complicated many of the decisions which had to be made in developing a historic site, at the same time as it gave many more people an input than had been the case in the early days of the Board.

In 1971-72 Parks Canada carried out a major review of its program, preparing formal management plans for all of the national historic sites which it operated. The 1972 management plan for Fort Battleford increased the emphasis on Fort Battleford as a police post, a centre of law enforcement and of territorial administration. Although the plan recognized the importance of the post's relations with Native people and settlers, and of the "siege" of 1885, it was clear that they were secondary themes. In particular, the plan stated that the involvement of the post with the events of 1885 should not be overemphasized.⁷²

In the 1970s Parks Canada also began to plan for a substantial interpretation of the history of the police force at Fort Walsh in southwestern Saskatchewan. The duplication of effort at Forts Walsh and Battleford was a continuing cause of concern within Parks Canada. This concern, plus the increasing interest in Native history, led to the adoption of a new set of themes and objectives for Fort Battleford in 1986: "Native People, Territorial Administration, and Law Enforcement on the Northern Plains."⁷³ The new themes were an attempt to develop around the police

post at Battleford a story line which would tell of the interaction between the police and Native people from the arrival of the police at Battleford in 1876 until the aftermath of the Rebellion. Significantly, the graves of the nine Indians who were hung at Fort Battleford in 1885 were listed as one of the most important resources related to the theme.

Both the 1972 and the 1986 plans for Fort Battleford set new directions for the interpretation of Fort Battleford, but neither plan has been fully implemented and the interpretation presented at the site remains thematically divided. The principal static exhibit (in the Barracks) is essentially unchanged from the one prepared in the late 1960s.⁷⁴ Two videos shown at the site appear to be of more recent provenance. A 10-minute video presents both white and Native perspectives on 1885 while an 18-minute video "River People" presents a sympathetic history of the Cree peoples who inhabited and still inhabit the area. The Native perspective on the fort is reinforced by tour guides, some of whom are Native people. A recent evaluation of the site suggests that "Celebrating the police and their accomplishments remains at least as strong a focus at the site" as "presenting the Métis and Indian ... as victims caught in a trap."⁷⁵

Batoche

At Batoche, Parks Canada acquired property and buildings but not existing museum exhibits. Exhibits were developed over a period of several years, and the museum was formally opened in 1961. The main exhibit had the general heading "Conflict of Cultures." It traced the history of the Métis, their exodus from Manitoba, the role of their "Blood Brothers" the Indians, and the "Advance of Foreign Culture." Slightly over one-third of the exhibit panels were devoted to the Rebellion of 1885. A secondary exhibit on the second floor of the rectory showed the history of the rectory as a priest's home, school and post office.⁷⁶ A brochure which was available at the time spoke of the Métis as "children of the fur trade," who "claimed an historic right to their share of the plains" although they had "no legal right to the land they occupied." "The government remained blandly indifferent to the troubles of the west."⁷⁷ The exhibit and brochure, while sympathetic to the Métis, retained something of George Stanley's view of the struggle as a conflict between primitive and civilized peoples. In the early 1960s, Stanley's interpretation was widely accepted; the explosion of research into both Métis and Indian culture was still a decade off. The brochure also echoed Stanley's and Morton's view of the rising as an expression of regional protest against a distant and insensitive government.

Prime Minister John Diefenbaker dedicated the museum on June 27, 1961. His speech echoed the tone of the Batoche brochure, describing the "uprising" as "the conflict of two ways of life, both with many admirable features."⁷⁸ He paid tribute to Gabriel Dumont and to the soldiers who had fought on both sides, but made no mention of Louis Riel or of Sir John A. Macdonald. The lesson he drew from the uprising was the importance of respecting minority rights and he linked the lesson to current issues with a reference to both the Canadian Bill of Rights, which his government had recently passed, and to the fact that it was only in 1959 that Canadian Indians had been granted the vote. One brief paragraph of his speech was delivered in French, a significant gesture on the part of the unilingual prime minister. The opening had a high profile, like the unveiling of the Cut Knife Hill

plaque 10 years earlier, but it lacked the local involvement of the Cut Knife Hill ceremony. Although a nephew of Gabriel Dumont and the chiefs of the Beardy and One Arrow reserves were present on the platform, they played no active role in the event. The difference may well reflect the fact that at Cut Knife the ceremony was held on land owned and controlled by the Native people, while at Batoche the ceremony was on land administered by Parks Canada.

Diefenbaker's speech is a remarkable indicator of changing attitudes. Although he was a Conservative and an admirer of Sir John A. Macdonald, he was also a westerner and a spokesman for regional interests. Equally important, he was an advocate of human rights; his references to the importance of respecting minority rights would have been acceptable to his Liberal predecessor, Louis St. Laurent.

A year after the opening of the museum, a visit by a detachment of the Royal Regiment of Canada to Batoche reinforced the theme of understanding and rapprochement which both St. Laurent and Diefenbaker had voiced. The Royal Regiment was a successor to the Royal Grenadiers which had fought at Batoche in 1885, and it initiated the visit as part of its centenary celebrations. Saskatchewan government officials involved in planning the visit advised that the ceremony should give recognition to the Métis and Indians as well as to the Canadian military.⁷⁹ Two hundred members of the regiment attended a ceremony at Batoche which the Regina *Leader-Post* described as "a four hour exchange of compliments and expressions of 'Let's work together for the good of everyone.'" The guard of honour was inspected by Mrs. Monture, author, historian, and great-granddaughter of Joseph Brant. Mrs. Monture and Colonel Frost, who commanded the detachment, placed wreaths on the grave of Gabriel Dumont. Malcolm F. Norris, representing the Métis of Saskatchewan, paid "tribute and honor to all those who fell in the rebellion of 1885 ... a struggle of brave men on both sides." He went on to say that the "Métis and Indians have a first right to more than has remained to them from the days when the whole land was theirs."⁸⁰ Norris' speech was an indication of the growing Aboriginal rights movement and a reminder that the interpretation at Batoche, and other 1885 sites, would continue to be contested.

The continuing shift in interpretive stance is evident in the management plan which Parks Canada developed for Batoche in 1972. The plan began with a statement of Batoche's historical significance, which lay in the proclamation of a "Provisional Government of Saskatchewan" under the leadership of Louis Riel and in the "decisive engagement" which effectively ended the "rebellion." The interpretive segment of the plan outlined the approach to be taken:

The main thrust of our interpretation at Batoche must be towards showing the visitor the life style of the Métis in the 1880s and what they were willing to fight to protect. Although Louis Riel played a crucial part in the story of the Rebellion, we believe the visitor must be made to realize the basic causes of the actions that were taken and fully understand the Métis and their point of view... Every attempt will have to be made to have the visitor think of the story and the action from the Métis point of view.⁸¹

The plan went on to recommend the construction of a new Visitor Reception Centre with interpretive facilities, the period restoration of both the rectory and the church, and the interpretation of the village site as well as the battle site. The strong emphasis on having the "visitor think of the story and the action from the Métis point of view" was a reversal of the point of view displayed in the plaque

BATOCHÉ

In 1872 Xavier Letendre *dit* Batoché founded a village at this site where Métis freighters crossed the South Saskatchewan River. About 50 families had claimed the river lots in the area by 1884. Widespread anxiety regarding land claims and a changing economy provoked a resistance against the Canadian Government. Here, 300 Métis and Indians led by Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont fought a force of 800 men commanded by Major-General Middleton between May 9 and 12, 1885. The resistance failed but the battle did not mean the end of the community of Batoché.

Figure 11. 1985 plaque text (HSMBC, Minutes, June 1985).

which the Board had approved in 1923. Louis Riel, the military events of 1885 and the point of view of the Canadian government were not eclipsed, but they were to be observed from a new angle. The new focus recalled, and moved beyond, D'Eschambault and Innes's recommendation in 1952 that "So far only the military operations have been given importance and consideration. Justice should be done to all participants in these tragic events which should be consid-

ered as a whole."⁸² Although the 1972 plan was eventually superseded, it guided research and development during the 1970s, and its point of view was incorporated into the subsequent plans.

During the later 1970s Parks Canada undertook archaeological and historical research in preparation for redeveloping the site. In keeping with the focus on the Métis point of view, the Parks Canada historian who was primarily responsible for Batoché, Diane Payment, carried out extensive oral history among the Métis population in the Batoché area. Her research contributed to the concept of the Métis as a people with an independent history which went beyond their involvement in two uprisings; it also built support and interest for the development of Batoché as a centre of Métis society. The plans to develop Batoché tapped into a growing activism and interest in preserving their heritage among the Métis: since at least 1971 Saskatchewan Métis had been organizing a "Back to Batoché" festival of Métis culture at Batoché. All of this activity culminated in the launching of a new round of management planning in the late 1970s, with the goal of using the centenary of the Battle of Batoché as a showcase for Parks Canada's 100th anniversary in 1985.⁸³

Planning for the centennial began with the preparation of a new statement of themes and objectives for the site. These were completed in 1979 and provided for two themes at Batoché: "The North West Rebellion of 1885" and "Métis Settlement in the Batoché District." The formal acceptance of two themes equal in importance was a significant innovation. The Board had never identified "Métis Settlement at Batoché" as a theme but, it was argued, the Board had "shown an increasing concern for the Métis perspective on the conflict"⁸⁴ and this concern required the Métis settlement to be interpreted on an equal basis with the political and military events of 1885. Whether or not Parks Canada was in advance of the Board on this issue became irrelevant in 1985 when the Board approved a new plaque text for Batoché (Figure 11) which effectively expanded the thematic framework to include both the North West Rebellion and Métis settlement.

The 1985 Batoché text gives almost equal play to the two themes commemorated at Batoché. It places the story of Batoché in a context which begins well before 1885, and it ends with an affirmation of the survival of the Métis community after the battle. It also provides a brief explanation of why the Métis engaged in resistance

to the Canadian government. The word "resistance" is significant; it is used where St. Laurent had used "uprising" and the Board in 1924 had used "rebellion." The origin of the term resistance to describe the events of 1885 is unclear. In 1956 W.L. Morton described the events at Red River in 1869–70 as a "resistance" and by the 1970s some scholars were applying "resistance" to the events of 1885.⁸⁵ While it is possible that "resistance" was intended as a less emotive term than "rebellion," for many Canadians it was primarily associated with "the Resistance," the patriotic French underground which fought against the occupying German forces in World War II. For those familiar with feminist and Afro-American academic literature, "resistance" has the sense of a struggle against an oppressive hegemony of gender, race or class. Given these associations, resistance was no more neutral than was rebellion. Its use, however, is consistent with the 1972 management statement that "Every attempt will have to be made to have the visitor think of the story and the action from the Métis point of view."⁸⁶

Public consultations on the future of Batoche NHS found that there was general support for the themes, for telling "both sides of the story," and for involving both the Métis and the Native people in the planning for the site.⁸⁷ The themes of Métis society and 1885 Rebellion were incorporated in the 1982 management plan which proposed the restoration of four of the surviving buildings on the site, the reconstruction of six buildings in the village of Batoche, and the construction of a modern Visitor Reception Centre to house interpretive programs. The work, with the exception of the reconstruction of buildings, was completed by 1985.

The new museum exhibit at Batoche presented a much a more detailed and sympathetic account of the Métis cause than had been available in earlier interpretations. It traced the history of the Metis from before the Red River Resistance in 1869–70 to the twentieth century, and reduced the military events of 1885 to a very important event in that history. Given the two, co-equal themes at the site, and the changing historiography of 1885, this change was to be expected. Nevertheless the change in emphasis shifted the earlier focus of the site from a key episode in Canadian history to an important event in Canadian history which was also a pivotal episode in the history of one of the constituent peoples of Canadian society.

An elaborate and powerful audio-visual presentation was also developed for presentation at the site. The presentation, which is still in use, employs multiple perspectives on the history of Batoche using the voices of Métis inhabitants, Canadian soldiers, Gabriel Dumont, Louis Riel, General Middleton and Sir John A. Macdonald.⁸⁸ The approach is an adaptation of what has since come to be called a "Many Voices" technique. Frieda Klippenstein, a historian with Parks Canada, has explained the "many voices" concept:

In a many voices context, visitors understand a site and its messages through a collage of vivid stories and images rather than one authoritative description and explanation of an event. It is reminiscent of some aspects of First Nations historical tradition. Though not uniform across all groups, one of the unique features of Native oral tradition is the idea that a person or group can tell only that part of the story that they have authority to tell, so each voice adds a component. The total picture of an event, then, requires a collage of these tellings.

A many voices approach is ... personal and multi-dimensional. It brings out the array of human impacts of a particular physical landscape, issue

or event. Some key characteristics of a many voices approach are that it recognizes the validity of various perspectives on an historical event without having to synthesize them, or to judge which are most "true" in order to weed out contradictions. It concedes that historical accounts are constructions, posited by individuals, parties, or whole sectors of society for their own conscious or unconscious purposes. And it requires various individuals or groups to be involved in historical commemoration, to contribute authentic expressions of the multiple meanings of a person, place or event. ... A key tenet of the many voices approach is to maintain the connection between story and storyteller.⁸⁹

The goal is "to get across the overarching message that there is no one ultimately "true" way to tell a story."⁹⁰ There are multiple meanings to a site such as Batoche, and the many voices approach is a means of reinforcing the multiplicity of potential messages.

At a theoretical level "many voices" may be a response to postmodern ambiguities in meaning and to the debate over the collapse of the concept of objective truth in history. If there is no authoritative version of an event, then the fairest and most objective way to describe it is through multiple, subjective perspectives or many voices. For a national heritage agency dealing with historical subjects on which there is no agreed interpretation, a balanced or "many voices" approach may be the wisest course. Avoidance of authoritative interpretations of historical events was raised to the level of policy in Parks Canada's Cultural Resource Management Policy statement of 1994:

Parks Canada will present the past in a manner that accurately reflects the range and complexity of the human history commemorated at or represented in a national historic site, historic canal or national park.

History will be presented with integrity. This will include the presentation of differing contemporary views, perspectives informed by traditional knowledge, and later interpretations. Parks Canada will not play the role of arbiter of Canada's human history.⁹¹

While this policy is well intended, it is disingenuous to suggest that Parks Canada, which implements the advice of the HSMBC, can avoid playing the role of arbiter of Canada's human history. The legislated role of the HSMBC is to provide advice on what is of national historic significance. The Board regularly makes recommendations to the minister on what is, and what is not, of national historic significance. Topics which the minister, on the advice of the Board, judges to be not of national significance are not given a voice at Parks Canada sites.

For example, in developing Batoche, Parks Canada carried out extensive consultations but these consultations were within the context of the existing themes for the site: "The North West Rebellion of 1885" and "Métis Settlement in the Batoche District." Suggestions from the public that post-1885 non-Métis settlement in the Batoche area be part of the interpretation were rejected on the grounds that it was not part of the themes established by the Board. Suggestions that First Nations involvement at Batoche receive greater prominence were rejected on the grounds that First Nations involvement in 1885 would be dealt with at other sites.⁹²

In practical terms "many voices" is Parks Canada's approach to dealing with an important site where there is no consensus as to its meaning. The conscious decision to present multiple perspectives implies acceptance of a more complex

historical reality than was present in early Board plaque texts. This complexity can only be conveyed to the visitor if credible accounts of the differing positions are presented. The success of the "many voices" approach depends largely on how well the "many voices" are selected and how sympathetically they are presented.

A visitor to Batoche in 1989 complained that the exhibit had not succeeded in presenting this complex historical reality. In a letter to his Member of Parliament, he described the audiovisual presentation as "elaborate and impressive", but complained that it did not "portray itself as just one perspective, but as the 'Real Story'." He noted that in the presentation an old Métis lamented that soon "there will be no one left to tell the real story", whereas, the visitor suggested, he should have said "our story." The visitor went on to give his interpretation of what he clearly regarded as the Second Riel Rebellion "However pure Riel's motives were perceived, he still started an armed rebellion, he took innocent hostages and even had one executed. Issues such as these were not addressed in the presentation... Armed rebellions should not be taken lightly."⁹³

The visitor was not alone. A 1990 report on the presentation of Aboriginal history at national historic sites stated:

Staff at Batoche visitor centre report that the Métis who see the production are generally pleased with the way in which their (*italics in original*) history is presented in the a/v show. Any complaints voiced about the production come from individuals who feel that the show depicts Riel, Dumont and the Métis in an excessively favourable light, at the expense of the military force whom the Canadian government called upon to deal with the resistance. (In particular, General Middleton and Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald are thought to be caricatured.) It will likely be another generation or two before there is no controversy surrounding the historical place of Louis Riel and the movements of which he was part.⁹⁴

The visitor's criticism might be dismissed as a misunderstanding of the audiovisual presentation. Moise, the "old Métis," was not intended to be an objective chronicler but a participant putting forward his view of the events. However, Moise is the principal narrator — he carries the story, with Riel, Dumont, Middleton, Macdonald and an unidentified Canadian soldier commenting at specific points. Moise, who may or may not be a historic figure, gives, through his voice and lines, a sympathetic portrayal of the Métis case. Sir John A. Macdonald, who would presumably have wished to articulate a case for Canada, is given lines which can be paraphrased as "we have no intention of stealing their miserable little plots" and "in a hundred years no one will remember Riel or the Metis but they will remember me."⁹⁵ He comes across as an overbearing, arrogant politician from outside of the region and culture, with no sympathy for the Métis or Riel. Whether or not the lines he is given are direct quotations from Macdonald's recorded speeches is not clear⁹⁶; even if they are, it is improbable that this is the voice Macdonald would have chosen to tell his story. Presumably, if all the major participants in a historical event are to be given an opportunity to tell their version of it, they should be allowed to make the best case possible. If the "many voices" approach is intended to convey the message that "there is no one ultimately 'true' way to tell a story," then the different versions of the story which are told must be sufficiently credible that the public can appreciate the complexity of history.

A more balanced presentation would also help the visitor understand how

earlier generations viewed historic events. Today, among both professional historians and Canadians generally there is substantial support for the Métis position and an equally broad condemnation of government mismanagement of the situation which led to the rising. The audiovisual presentation reflects present-day attitudes but gives little indication of how widespread support for the military suppression of the rebellion was in 1885. This was true even in French-speaking, Roman Catholic Québec; it was only when it became clear that the government intended to execute Riel that Québec came to view him as a martyr and the Métis as compatriots.⁹⁷ Although there was fervent opposition in Québec to Riel's execution, Macdonald's Conservative party, which supported his execution, nevertheless defeated the Liberals, who opposed the execution, in both Québec and the rest of Canada in the general election of 1887. This support is not made clear in the audiovisual presentation; a young Canadian soldier, who might be expected to provide the eastern Canadian public voice, delivers what is in effect a plaintive anti-war message. Although this message resonates with late twentieth-century sensibilities, it does nothing to inform the viewer of the passions which explain the support for the war at the time.

Although Parks Canada may wish to avoid becoming the arbiter of Canadian history, it cannot avoid the responsibility of balancing different legitimate interpretations of events at sites which it interprets. The concept of 'many voices' provides a framework within which this balancing act can be carried out, but it requires all of the skills which are a part of traditional history. Moreover, to the extent that it is successful in conveying the message that "there is no one ultimately 'true' way to tell a story," it will remain controversial. Unresolved stories are emotionally unsatisfying; more importantly, they do not supply validation which communities involved in Canadian history seek.

The interpretation of the 1885 sites has never been static and it is not likely to become so. As this is being written, a new management plan, with revised interpretive themes, for Fort Battleford is nearing completion. At the same time Parks Canada and the HSMBC are engaged in a long-overdue review of the interpretation of Native involvement in the 1885 rising. Both of these revisions will be shaped by the same forces which have led to the re-interpretation of Batoche.

Conclusion

The past is not a unitary state but an unstable federation of competing concepts, each with its supporters struggling for their place in the sun. In Canada, as in many countries, different groups have supported different views of the past as a means of defining their vision of their nation and of strengthening their own identity within that nation. Each group has struggled to make its interpretation the accepted history, thereby legitimizing its claim to power and strengthening its identity. Universal acceptance has always eluded any one vision; competing visions survive to challenge, and sometimes supplant, the dominant version.

Commemoration of historic events, people and places is an important means of establishing and defining a common history, establishing consensus, and legitimating authority. Consequently control of commemoration — what is recognized and how it is presented — is a crucial aspect of defining collective memories. In Canada there was a surge of commemorative activity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; this activity was carried out by a variety of individuals and

groups with a diverse range of views and interpretations of Canadian history. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada was established by the federal government in 1919 to undertake a national program of commemoration. The Board received no explicit direction from the government as to the approach it should take to commemoration, but it was dominated by a small group of English-speaking professionals of about the same age and outlook. They developed a commemorative program which can best be described as central Canadian, with a focus on the survival and expansion of Canada in North America. Until 1937 none of the members were from the Prairie provinces; French Canada was not absent from the program but it was confined to Québec; ethnic minorities and Aboriginal people were almost completely absent from the program.

In 1923 the Board recognized six sites associated with the 1885 North West Rebellion — Batoche, Battleford, Duck Lake Battlefield, Fish Creek Battlefield, Cut Knife Battlefield, and Frog Lake Massacre — as sites of national historic significance. In the plaque texts which were erected at the sites, they were portrayed from a central Canadian viewpoint in the context of the expansion of Canada and western civilization across North America. This interpretation of Canada and the events of 1885 was contested, unsuccessfully, by some white Canadians and by many Native People and Métis. Many of the individuals on both sides of the debate could remember the events being commemorated, and some had been personally involved in them.

In the decade after 1945, the 1885 sites were reinterpreted. This reinterpretation was a response to continuing dissatisfaction with the original interpretation, growing pressure from local communities, developing regional consciousness, changing personnel on the Board and, not least important, changing historiography. In preparing new texts for Batoche, Cut Knife Hill and Fort Battleford, the Board consulted with some of the communities which had protested the original interpretation. The revised texts avoided an overtly triumphalist version of central Canadian history by focussing on the events of 1885, while avoiding any consideration of the causes or results of the events. In effect they avoided discussing the significance of the events and as a result were arid, uninformative and unsatisfying.

Within a few years of the second interpretation of the 1885 sites, a number of changes led to a third interpretation. A change in interpretive philosophy within Parks Canada, epitomized by the "big project," allowed a more complex interpretation of historic events than had been possible under the system of commemoration by plaques. The growth of a large bureaucracy, including heritage professionals, increased the number of individuals who had input into Parks Canada interpretations. The growth of regionalism, of the Aboriginal rights movement, and of a historiography sympathetic to both regional and Aboriginal rights required the development of interpretations which were more sympathetic both to regional and Aboriginal viewpoints. This led to much more extensive public consultations than had been done in the past. The reinterpretation has proceeded unevenly and is still in progress. Relatively little has been done at Cut Knife Hill or at sites such as Frog Lake; more has been done at Fort Battleford.

The third generation of interpretation is most fully developed at Batoche, which now carries two equal themes, the Battle of Batoche in 1885 and the history of the Métis settlement at Batoche. The interpretation is intended to present multiple perspectives on the events of 1885 without consciously attempting to reconcile

them or to select one perspective as being the preferable one. However, the sympathetic portrayal of the Métis settlement at Batoche leaves the overall impression that the armed resistance of the Métis was both understandable and justifiable.

Between 1924 and 1985 the interpretive focus at the 1885 sites has shifted from "rebellion" to "resistance." The change in focus is a reflection of a general shift in the tone of most historical writing which now places much of the blame for the rebellion on the federal government. It is also a response to the growing self-confidence and influence of regions and of Aboriginal people who support a different version of Canada than General Cruikshank did 75 years ago. The new interpretation is not universally accepted; there are still those who believe that "armed rebellions should not be taken lightly" but they are among those protesting Parks Canada's current interpretation, much as the residents of Batoche and Poundmaker's Reserve were in the 1920s.

Appendix
Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, Membership, 1919-60
(Taylor, Negotiating the Past, pp. 193-98)

Chairman		1955-59	Harry Walker
		1959-61	A.R.M. Lower
1919-39	E.A. Cruikshank, Ont.		
1939-42	Vacant	Ontario II	
1943-44	F.W. Howay, B.C.		
1945-50	J.C. Webster, N.B.	1919-32	James Coyne
1950-58	Fred Landon, Ont.	1932-58	Fred Landon
1958-60	Mgr. A. D'Eschambault, Man.	1958-72	D.G. Creighton
Alberta		Prince Edward Island	
1944-55	M.H. Long	1950-58	Thane Campbell
1956	M.E. Lazerte	1959-66	Earl Taylor
1957-59	Joel K. Smith		
1959-67	R.Y. Secord	Québec I	
British Columbia		1919-23	Benjamin Sulte
		1924-25	Victor Morin
1923-44	F.W. Howay	1925-26	Aegidius Fauteaux
1945-59	W.N. Sage	1927-29	P. Demers
1960-67	Margaret Ormsby	1930-33	Maréchal Nantel
		1933-55	E.-F. Surveyer
Manitoba		1955-60	Jules Bazin
1937-59	Mgr. A. D'Eschambault	Québec II	
1959-60	W. Smith		
		1955-60	Édouard Fiset
New Brunswick		Saskatchewan	
1919-23	W.O. Raymond		
1923-50	J.C. Webster	1937-50	J.A. Gregory
1950-61	A.G. Bailey	1951-54	Campbell Innes
		1955-60	R. Mayson
Newfoundland		National Archives (ex officio)	
1950-55	C.E.A. Jeffrey		
1959-60	Oliver Vardy	1937-49	Gustave Lanctôt
		1949-68	W. Kaye Lamb
Nova Scotia		National Museum of Canada (ex officio)	
1919-23	W.C. Milner		
1923-25	J.P. Edwards	1951-55	F. Alcock
1925-30	W. Crowe	1956-58	Vacant
1931-54	D.C. Harvey	1959-61	Clifford Wilson
1954	Thomas Raddall		
1955-69	C. Bruce Fergusson		
Ontario I			
1919-39	E.A. Cruikshank		
1939-54	Vacant		

Notes

1. Robert Gildea, *The Past in French History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 10, 1–12.
2. Gildea, *The Past in French History*, 10. Gildea bases his discussion of collective memory on Maurice Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950).
3. Gildea, *The Past in French History*, 10.
4. Commemorations of places, people, and events related to 1885 include: Fort Battleford, Battle of Cut Knife Hill, Battle of Duck Lake, Battle of Fish Creek, Fort Carlton, Fort Pitt, Frenchman Butte, Steele Narrows, Frog Lake Massacre, Big Bear, Gabriel Dumont, Louis Riel, Poundmaker, Samuel Steele, Alberta Field Force, Battleford-Swift Current Trail.
5. C.J. Taylor, *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Canada's National Historic Parks and Sites* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), xvi–xviii; C.J. Taylor, "Some Early Problems of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 64, no. 1 (1983): 24.
6. Walter Hildebrandt, *View from Fort Battleford: Constructed Visions of an Anglo-Canadian West* (Regina: Great Plains Research Center, 1994), 103–9.
7. Frits Pannekoek, "Who Matters? Public History and the Invention of the Canadian Past," *Acadiensis* 29, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 206–10.
8. Taylor, *Negotiating the Past*, 3–31.
9. David McConnell, "Whether and how recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada were communicated to the Minister during the period covered by the archival records" (unpublished paper prepared for National Historic Sites Directorate, January 2000).
10. David McConnell, "E.A. Cruikshank: His Life and Work" (MA thesis, University of Toronto, 1965), 66, 68.
11. Taylor, *Negotiating the Past*, 85–88.
12. National Archives of Canada (hereafter NAC), RG84, Vol. 1380, HS-10-3-2, Part 1, Howay to Harkin 18 September 1925, T-14148.
13. Ibid., Coyne to Harkin, 8 October 1923, T-14148.
14. Ibid., Vol. 1381, HS-10-3-4, Part 1, Howay to Harkin, 20 November 1923, T-14149.
15. Ibid., Vol. 979, BA2, Part 1, Clipping, Winnipeg *Free Press*, 11 July 1925.
16. Québec City, *Le Soleil*, quoted in C.J. Taylor, "Some Early Problems," 22.
17. The bishop's initial response is not on file and the wording of his conditions must be deduced from subsequent correspondence. NAC, RG84, Vol. 979, File BA2, Part 1, Harkin to Prudhomme, 5 July 1924 and 20 August 1924, T-11020.
18. NAC, RG84, Vol. 979, File BA2, Part 1, Howay to Harkin, 8 September 1924, T-11020.
19. Ibid., Prudhomme to Harkin, 26 March 1926, T-11020.
20. Ibid., Part 2, Board Minute, May 1926, T-11020.
21. Ibid., Murray to Macpherson, 25 November 1929, T-11020.
22. Ibid., Vol. 1379, HS-10-3, draft of "The Sack of Battleford," T-14147.
23. Ibid., Vol. 1381, HS-10-3-4, Part 1, Clipping, Ottawa *Journal*, 29 August 1925, T-14149.
24. Ibid., Kennedy to HSMBC, 11 May 1929, T-14149.
25. Ibid., Macdonald, Indian Agent, to Scott, 26 July 1926, T-14149.
26. Ibid., undated, unsigned memo, c. 1926, T-14149. The memo may have been written by A.S. Morton of the University of Saskatchewan.
27. Saskatchewan Indian, January/February 1989, p. 1, "John B. Tootoosis, 1899–1989," <http://www.sicc.sk.ca/saskindian/a89jan01.htm>
28. NAC, RG84, Vol. 1380, File HS-10-3-1, Part 2, Howay to Harkin, 4 May 1927, T-14147.
29. Ibid., Vol. 979, File BA2, Part 2, Howay to Harkin, 3 July 1930, T-11020.
30. Ibid., Vol. 1381, HS-10-3-4, Part 1, Howay to Harkin, 16 September 1925, T-14149.
31. Ibid., Part 2, Board Minute, 29 May 1931 and brass rubbing of text. The revised text read: NORTH WEST REBELLION/BATTLE OF CUT KNIFE HILL/At daybreak, 2nd May, 1885, Canadian forces under Lieutenant/ Colonel William Dillon Otter, marching from Battleford to attack/ Poundmaker's camp, were discovered and fired upon by hostile Indians/concealed in the ravines on this slope. After some six hours'/fighting, the troops found their position untenable and retired to/ Battleford.
32. Ibid., Saskatchewan to Harkin, 3 January 1930, T-14149.
33. Ibid., Forin to Howay, 6 September 1935; *ibid.*, Draft "The Monument at Cut Knife" by Fred Williams; Canada. *Debates*. House of Commons. Vol. 1, p. 527, 25 February 1936.
34. Howard Angus Kennedy, *The North-West Rebellions* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1928).
35. Douglas Owram, "The Myth of Louis Riel," *Canadian Historical Review* 63, no. 3 (1982): 324–25. My interpretation of historiography on Riel, the Métis, and 1885 draws heavily on Owram and on J.R. Miller, "From Riel to the Métis," *Canadian Historical Review* 69, no. 1 (1988): 1–20.

36. NAC, RG84, Vol. 979, File BA2, Part 3, Allard to D'Eschambault, 1 March 1944; *ibid.*, D'Eschambault to Cromarty, 6 March 1944; *ibid.*, Board minute, 26 May 1944, T-11020.
37. *Ibid.*, Gregory to Cromarty, 15 August 1949, T-11020.
38. *Ibid.*, Dubuc to Minister of Mines and Resources, 11 September 1951; *ibid.*, Dubuc to Childs, 14 October 1951.
39. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1379, HS-10-3, Part 2, "Committee to Report on the Events of 1885," c. May 1952, T-14147. The report, which was submitted after Prime Minister St. Laurent raised the issue of the appropriate terminology to describe the "events of 1885," avoided the use of the terms rebellion, uprising and resistance.
40. NAC, MG26, L, Vol. 393, Clippings, Visits to Saskatchewan, North Battleford News, 9 August 1951, "Prime Minister Inspects N.W.M.P. Museum."
41. NAC, RG84, Vol. 1379, HS-10-3, Part 2, clipping, Toronto *Daily Star*, 9 August 1951, T-14147; *ibid.*, clipping, Prince Albert *Herald*, 7 August 1951, T-14157.
42. *Ibid.*, Ottawa *Journal*, "Other Views: Rewriting History," 21 August 1951, T-14147; NAC, MG26, L, Vol. 393, Clippings, Visits to Saskatchewan, North Battleford News, "The Prime Minister's Visit," 16 August 1951; Winnipeg *Tribune*, 8 August 1951, "P.M. Prefers Uprising to a 'Riel Rebellion'."
43. *Ibid.*, Vol. 109, File HS-25-2-R, 1951-52, St. Laurent to Winters, August 1951.
44. NAC, RG84, Vol. 1379, File HS-10-3, Part 2, Board Minutes, 28-30 May 1952, T-14147.
45. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1381, HS10-3-4, Part 3, undated affidavit (c.1950) by Thomas Favel, T-14149.
46. *Ibid.*, Clipping, unnamed North Battleford paper, "No truer Canadians Gov. Gen. tells Indians," T-14149.
47. Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*, 24 October 1952; Regina *Leader-Post*, 4 November 1952.
48. Brochure issued by "Chief Poundmaker Historical Centre and Teepee Village. Poundmaker Cree Nation, Canada."
49. Frieda Klippenstein, "First Nations Involvement in the 1885 North West Rebellion/Resistance," HSMBC Agenda Paper, 1999-12A, p. 488.
50. NAC, RG84, Vol. 1057, File BA2, Part 1, "Memorial and Museum Plans," T-11975.
51. *Ibid.*, "Report of the Committee on the Proposed Indian Museum at Battleford," T-11974; *ibid.*, Board Minute, 17-19 May 1947.
52. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1379, HS-10-3, Part 3, Herbert to Tatso, 20 [February] 1962, T-14147.
53. The full text of the Riel plaque read: LOUIS RIEL/ 1844-1885/ Born at St. Boniface, October 27, 1844. When the Hudson's Bay Company/ceded Ruperts Land to the Canadian Government in 1869-70 he led the Métis/of Red River and established a "Provisional Government." Following the/ execution of Thomas Scott, he fled to the United States. He returned to/Canada in 1884 and the next year led the Metis uprising. Following/military defeat at Batoche he surrendered and after being found guilty of/treason he was hanged at Regina, November 16, 1885. Riel is recognized as/one of the founders of the Province of Manitoba.
54. John Coulter, *The Crime of Louis Riel* (Toronto: Playwrights Coop, 1976), Forward (*sic*), makes this link to the Third World explicit.
55. Winnipeg *Tribune* files, Roll 99, Northwest Rebellion, H.C. Knox to the Editor, 24 Dec. 1948.
56. NAC, RG84, Vol. 1379, File HS-10-3, Part 2, Lightbody to Secretary, HSMBC, 9 June 1950, T-14147.
57. J.M.S. Careless, "Limited Identities in Canada," in Carl Berger (ed.), *Contemporary Approaches to Canadian History* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1987), 6.
58. Miller, "From Riel to the Métis," 7-8; O'ram, "The Myth of Louis Riel," 333.
59. Miller "From Riel to the Métis," 9.
60. Richard C. Daniel, "A History of Native Claims Processes in Canada, 1867-1979" (unpublished report prepared for Research Branch, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, February 1980, Chapters 10 and 12).
61. Taylor, *Negotiating the Past*, 103, 107-8, 126.
62. *Ibid.*, 87, 130-31; HSMBC Minutes, 19 May 1943, p. 4.
63. Quoted in Taylor, *Negotiating the Past*, 131.
64. McConnell, "Whether and how recommendations...", 3-4.
65. NAC, RG84, Vol. 1057, File FBA2, Part 1, Stewart to Smart, 7 July 1951, T-11975.
66. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1060, File FBA318, Part 3, undated report, c. 1968, T-11977.
67. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1059, File FBA109, Part 5, Clipping *News-Optimist*, 28 June 1968, T-11976.
68. Walter Hildebrandt, "Where Myth Meets History," *Newest Review* (April/May 1989): 27.
69. Parks Canada, *Guiding Principles and Operational Policies* (Canada: Minister of Supply and Services 1994), 119.
70. NAC, RG84, Vol. 1059, File FBA155, Part 1, Battleford Board of Trade to Minister of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, 24 June 1957, T-11976.

71. Ibid., File FBA109, Part 4, undated clipping North Battleford *News-Optimist*, "A Challenging Future."
72. Parks Canada, File 8400/F4, Battleford Management Plan, 20 January 1972.
73. Parks Canada, "Themes and Objectives. Fort Battleford National Historic Park" (1986), 3–5.
74. Photos of the exhibit taken c. 1970, show substantially the same panels and artefacts as were present in May 2000. Parks Canada, Winnipeg Office, Tatro Photos, Battleford, nos. 59 to 150. The panel on the events of 1885 has the title "The Uprising 1885/La Rebellion de 1885" with a more recent addition to the panel giving the title "The North-West Resistance of 1885."
75. Klippenstein, "First Nations Involvement," 488, 505.
76. NAC, RG84, Vol. 981, File BA318, Part 2, Tatro to Herbert, 24 November 1960, T-11114; *ibid.*, Herbert to Wilson, 14 September 1961, T-11114.
77. Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, National Historic Sites Division, *Batoche National Historic Site* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1960).
78. NAC, Diefenbaker Papers, MG26, M, Vol.176, File313.25, Saskatchewan, pp.145610-689, Reel M-7867, Notes for an address by the Rt. Hon. J.G. Diefenbaker, "The Official Opening of Batoche National Historic Site."
79. Ibid., Vol. 578, File 918-Batoche, pp. 440326–28, Reel M-8926, Hill to Frost, 28 September 1961.
80. Regina *Leader-Post*, "Soldiers meet Indians Metis again at Batoche," 5 July 1962, p. 36.
81. Department of Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada File 8400/B3, Batoche Management Plan, 2 March 1972.
82. NAC, RG84, Vol. 1379, HS-10-3, Part 2, "Committee to Report on the Events of 1885," c. 1952, T-14147.
83. "Batoche Management Guidelines," approved 26 October 1979, p. 1.
84. "Batoche National Historic Park, Themes and Objectives," Approved 14 September 1979.
85. Morton wrote: "The term Resistance is used deliberately. Not only was it frequently employed at the time, it also possesses the merit of describing precisely the spirit and intent of the actions of the *métis* in 1869–70, without resorting to the legally accurate but nevertheless misleading term 'rebellion.' The opinion advanced is that Riel and his followers did commit acts of rebellion, but did so in the belief that they were both morally and legally justified." W.L. Morton, *Alexander Begg's Red River Journal and Other Papers Relative to the Red River Resistance of 1869–1870* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1956), 1, fn. 2. David T. McNab used the term resistance in his article on the Colonial Office and the Prairies in *Prairie Forum* in 1978.
86. Department of Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada File 8400/B3, Batoche Management Plan, 2 March 1972.
87. Parks Canada, *Batoche Alternatives* (February 1981), 3.
88. The audiovisual presentation prepared in 1985 was revised in the late 1990s. This discussion is based on a viewing in May 2000.
89. Frieda Esau Klippenstein, "On a New Approach to Heritage Presentation at National Historic Sites," *Research Links* (Summer/Autumn 1999): 3–4.
90. Personal communication, F. Klippenstein to A. McCullough, 28 February 2000.
91. Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada, *Guiding Principles and Operational Policies* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1994), 105–6.
92. Heritage Canada, Parks Canada, 8400/B3, Vol. 1, Batoche NHS. "Public Comments on Themes and Objectives" August 1980.
93. Parks Canada, 8400/B3, vol. 1, Campbell to Hawkes, 17 July 1989. The reference to a hostage being executed suggests that Mr. Campbell conflated the Resistance of 1869–70 in Manitoba with the 1885 Rebellion in the North West Territories. The error does not invalidate his point; indeed the vehemence of Ontario's demand for Riel's execution in 1885 owed much to its memory of the execution/murder of Thomas Scott in 1870.
94. A.J.B. Johnston, *Toward a New Past: Report on the Current Presentation of Aboriginal History by Parks Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada, 1995), 234.
95. These are paraphrases, taken during a viewing of the audiovisual show in May 2000. Parks Canada was unable to provide me with a copy of the script.
96. Diane Payment, the primary Parks Canada historian of Batoche, wrote "The Batoche video is more like a docu-drama than a historical documentary. The script writer was Jake MacDonald who had access to historical studies that Walter Hildebrandt, myself and others had done on Batoche. The lines that you quote from Macdonald were either direct quotes, paraphrases and I suspect some literary licence based on Macdonald's words." Diane Payment to Alan McCullough, 28 June 2000. Some of Macdonald's lines — for example, "Riel shall hang though every dog in Quebec barks" — are recognizable quotations. The ones cited in the text are not familiar to me. Parks Canada does not

have a policy which deals with the attribution of lines to historic characters in audiovisual presentations. Given that these documentaries are seen by far more people than Parks Canada's meticulously documented research reports, this is a significant gap.

97. A.I. Silver, *The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation, 1864-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 153 and ch. 7.