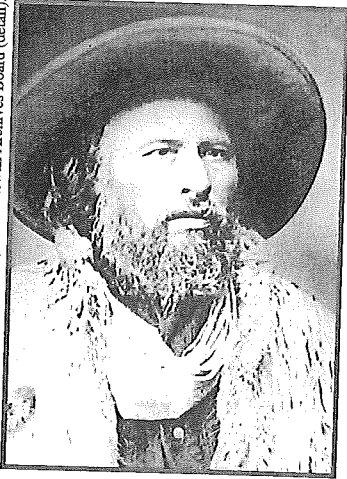


Military Leaders

Gabriel Dumont

R-A6277, Saskatchewan Archives Board (detail).



Gabriel Dumont was one of the most respected men in the North-West. He was an excellent rider and marksman. He had come to the North-West in 1872 from Manitoba because he was unhappy with conditions there.

Dumont spoke French and six Native languages. He was a natural leader. He proved to be a skillful military strategist. He often

argued with Riel about military plans. Dumont wanted to use guerrilla hit-and-run tactics on the Canadian troops, knowing that this was the only way their small number of men could have any success against the far larger Canadian force. Riel insisted they meet the troops in an eye-to-eye battle at Batoche. Following the resistance, Dumont fled to the United States, where he joined "Buffalo Bill" Cody's travelling Wild West Show. He returned to Batoche after an official pardon (an amnesty) was granted to those who had taken part in the Resistance.

Major-General Frederick Middleton

ACC6876#23, Archives of Ontario.



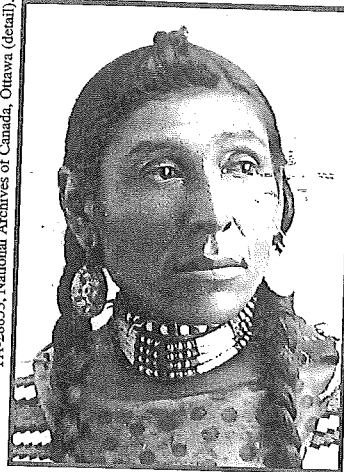
Major-General Frederick Middleton was a British infantry officer who had served in Africa, India, and New Zealand. He came to Canada in 1884 and was placed in charge of the Canadian Militia.

Middleton led his soldiers in the battles of Fish Creek and Batoche. It is thought that the storming of the Metis rifle pits by his troops on the fourth day at

Batoche was not done under his orders. For his part in the Resistance, Middleton received a medal and \$20 000.

Poundmaker

PA-28853, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa (detail).



Poundmaker was a Cree chief and adopted son of Crowfoot. Crowfoot adopted him in an effort to keep peace between their peoples. Poundmaker got his name from his skill at driving buffalo into "pounds" or enclosures where they were trapped and then killed.

Poundmaker's people were having trouble adjusting to a farming life from

the hunting life they had known. They missed the freedom of following the buffalo and were confined to a reserve with sandy soil that was not good for growing crops. They did not have enough to eat and grew more and more frustrated because the government would not listen to them.

It was this frustration which found its expression in Battleford after the government agent refused to speak with the Cree delegation. Poundmaker then withdrew to Cut Knife Hill, where he awaited Colonel Otter and his soldiers. After about six hours of fighting, the First People were gradually surrounding the troops, when Colonel Otter withdrew. Poundmaker stopped his men from following the soldiers and attacking them.

After the rebellion Poundmaker was sentenced to three years in prison, but was released after several months. He died while visiting Chief Crowfoot shortly after his release, and was buried in Crowfoot's camp. In 1967, his body was returned to his reserve and buried on the hill where the battle of Cut Knife took place.

Big Bear

C-17430, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa (detail).



Big Bear was very unhappy with the federal government's treatment of the First People and hoped that threats of a resistance would make the government take notice. He did not want to take part in a confrontation; he wanted to resist peacefully. But when his followers took up arms, as their leader he took responsibility for their actions. He was sentenced to three years for his

part in the resistance. Like Poundmaker, he died shortly after his release.

Zoom In Poundmaker, Big Bear, Crowfoot, and the Resistance

By the early 1880s, Poundmaker was openly critical of the government's failure to honour its obligations. In response, the government refused food rations for his people. However, when Louis Riel asked for Poundmaker's support, he refused, believing that resistance was futile.

In 1885, as the Northwest Uprising began, Poundmaker led his people to Battleford for supplies. The townspeople panicked, hiding in the nearby fort. The Cree left the next day, but the town was looted and partly burned. Poundmaker was blamed.

Two months later, Poundmaker's people defended themselves when attacked by Canadian troops at Cut Knife Hill. Poundmaker then heard about Riel's defeat, and went to Batoche. He was arrested for treason and sentenced to three years in prison. Released after seven months, Poundmaker died shortly after.



FIGURE 5-18 Poundmaker

Cree chief Big Bear would not sign Treaty No. 6 until he could consult with his people. His determination gave him the reputation of being "difficult." For six years, Big Bear refused to sign the treaty. Finally, starvation forced him to sign in 1882.

Big Bear also refused to join the Northwest Uprising. In April 1885, his band was refused supplies at Frog Lake. Starving and angry, the Cree's young war leader, Wandering Spirit, took nine townspeople as hostages. Through a misunderstanding, the hostages were killed. Big Bear was blamed. After several weeks, he surrendered, and Wandering Spirit was hanged for murder. Big Bear was convicted of treason and sentenced to three years. He died shortly after his release in 1888.

Siksika chief Crowfoot followed a different path. While he did not like the treaties, he was resigned to them. In 1877, he signed Treaty No. 7.



FIGURE 5-19 Big Bear

Six years later, the railway encroached on Crowfoot's reserve. He confronted the rail crews, and work on the line stopped. Father Albert Lacombe, who had lived among the Siksika since 1870, led negotiations between Crowfoot and the CPR. Crowfoot received additional land as compensation. William Van Horne, manager of the CPR, was pleased with the peaceful outcome and awarded both Lacombe and Crowfoot lifetime passes on the railway.

When the Northwest Uprising began, Crowfoot refused to take part. While he did not like the fact that Europeans were settling the Prairies, he recognized the inevitability of change and did his best to protect his people. Crowfoot died of tuberculosis in 1890.

- How did each leader's response have an impact on the development of Canada?

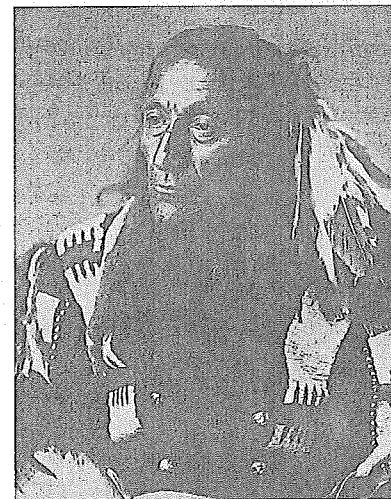


FIGURE 5-20 Crowfoot