GRADE 8 HISTORY

UNIT TWO: THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN CANADA

STUDENT TEXT

By Emilia Bartolomucci
Grade 8 History UNIT TWO: THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN CANADA

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In *Unit 1: Confederation*, you learned how the Dominion of Canada was born in 1867. At that time, Canada was a small country with only four provinces: Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. These provinces were much smaller than they are today. There was still a vast area of land north and west of these provinces. Rupert’s Land, the North-West Territories and British Columbia were not yet part of Canada. Many different groups of people lived there.

In this unit, you will learn how the government of Canada got control of these vast lands and added new provinces and territories to the Dominion of Canada. You will study how western Canada changed and developed between 1867 and 1890. You will find out how the different groups of people living there felt about becoming part of Canada and the changes that were happening.
Unit Expectations

In this unit, you will learn the answers to these questions:

- What was life like for the different groups of people living on the western prairies?
- What led to the settlement of the Canadian West?
- How did treaties and the Indian Act of 1876 change the lives of First Nations people in the Canadian West?
- How did the Canadian Pacific Railway help Canada grow?
  - Who helped to build the railway?
- What were the causes and results of the Red River Rebellion of 1869-1870 and the North-West Rebellion of 1885?
  - Who were the important people in these rebellions?
  - What did they do?
- How did the following things help Canada expand westward?
  - immigration
  - new wheat strains
  - the Klondike gold rush

You will also learn and practice these skills:

- use primary and secondary sources of information for different purposes
- analyze, synthesize, and evaluate historical information
- look at historical events from different points of view
- communicate information in many different ways (graphic organizers, political cartoons, drama, oral presentations, charts, drawings, art etc.) and for different purposes and audiences
- learn and use new vocabulary words

You will also to:

- compare the North-West Mounted Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- create a photo essay or a piece of art that reflects a part of history of the Canadian West
Chapter Four: LIFE ON THE WESTERN PRAIRIES

Chapter Four Overview:

In this chapter, you will learn...

- Why did the Canadian government want to make the West part of the Dominion of Canada?
- How did the government of Canada plan to develop the West?
- What was life like for the different groups of people living on the western prairies?

Chapter Four: Key Vocabulary

- prairies
- expansion
- treaty
- pie graph
- traditional
- environment
- pemmican
- stampeded
- herds
- sacred
- natural resources
- interpreter
- profit
- violence
- honoured
- slaughter
- cattle
- cattle baron
- destruction
- human race
- rifles
- surrendered
- extinct
- unique
- ancestors
- michif
- clergy
- title
- civilization
- savage
- progress
Canada's Western Prairies

Canada's western prairies are an area of low flat or gently rolling land with few trees. Today, these prairies are part of the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. However, in 1867, these lands were not provinces. They were part of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories. In this chapter, you will learn WHY and HOW the Canadian government planned to make these lands part of Canada. You will also learn about the lives of the people who lived there before the Canadian government began putting its plans into action.
Why did the Canadian government want to make the West part of Canada?

After Confederation, the Canadian government wanted Canada to grow. There were three main reasons why they thought westward expansion would be good for Canada...

1. The Canadian government wanted to stop the United States from taking over land in the West. It felt the United States wanted the West because they...
   - believed in Manifest Destiny
   - bought Alaska from Russia in 1867
   - were building railway lines across the American west
   - were trading with the people of the prairies
   - were moving into the western plains

2. There was good farmland in the West. People from eastern Canada and new immigrants could come and settle there. The population of Canada could grow more.

3. It would be good for Canada's economy. There would be more trade between the eastern provinces and the West. The West could grow food to feed the growing population of eastern Canada. They could also buy manufactured goods from eastern Canada. Having a port on the Pacific Ocean would also be good for international trade.
How did the government of Canada plan to develop the West?

To develop the West, the government of Canada planned to...

1. Buy Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company

2. Make British Columbia part of Canada

3. Bring law and order to the West

4. Gain control of Aboriginal lands through treaties

5. Build a great railway across Canada from the Pacific to the Atlantic.

6. Bring more settlers to live in the Canadian West
What was life like for the different groups of people on the western prairies?

At the time of Confederation, three main groups of people lived in what is now western Canada: the First Nations people, the Metis, and the Europeans.

This pie graph shows how many of each group lived in the West.

In the next section, you will learn what life was like for these three groups of people who lived on the western prairies.
Before the first European fur traders came, the First Nations people had lived on the western prairies for thousands of years. There were many different groups such as the Cree, Tsuu T'ina (Sarcee), Siksika, Nakota (Assiniboine) and Blackfoot. They spoke different languages and had a different way of life. The First Nations people of this area had led a traditional way of life. They had made tools from stone and animal bones. They had hunted, trapped, fished and gathered things to eat from their environment. The First Nations of the southern prairies had depended on the buffalo to survive. They had dried the buffalo meat and mixed it with fat and berries to make a special food called pemmican. The buffalo had also given them their clothing, shelter and many other things they needed. For hundreds of years, they had followed the migrating herds across the Great Plains of North America. At first, they had hunted them on foot, using bows and arrows or stampeded them over cliffs. When horses came to the plains, they were able to ride with the buffalo herds and kill them more easily.

The First Nations people believed all things in nature had a spirit and therefore, were sacred. The land and its natural resources were gifts from the Great Spirit for all to share. They knew a lot about nature and animal life. Because they depended on their environment to survive, they did not use more than they needed. They showed great respect for nature and the gifts the Great Spirit had given them. They passed on their knowledge, beliefs, and traditions to their children by telling them stories or legends.

Many First Nations had a chief but they made decisions by consensus. They talked until everyone agreed with the decision.
When the French and British fur traders first came to the west in the 1600s, the traditional life of the First Nations people slowly began to change. The First Nations people traded furs with the newcomers and helped them to survive. The Cree and Assiniboine supplied food, moccasins, snowshoes and fixed canoes for the people at the fur trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company. Some learned to speak French or English. They became interpreters and guides. In exchange, the First Nations people got guns, blankets, metal knives and other European goods. These things made their lives easier.

European missionaries also came to give them a new faith to believe in: Christianity. They also brought European ideas and ways of living. Some Aboriginal people began to accept the new faith and ideas and lost their own spiritual beliefs and skills.

As more Europeans came west, life became more and more difficult for the First Nations people. First of all, the Europeans had brought diseases which spread like fire among them. Their bodies could not defend themselves and tens of thousands died. Secondly, the fur traders would often give Aboriginal people alcohol in exchange for furs. Their bodies were not used to alcohol so it made them very sick. It also caused more violence and deaths. Thirdly, the Europeans did not think land and its natural resources were a gift from the Great Spirit to be shared. They believed land and its resources could be bought and sold for profit. Some settlers from the east came to live on the land and claim it as their own. More importantly, the fur trade changed the First Nations’ relationship with the animals they hunted. Before, they had hunted only what they needed for survival. Now, they also killed animals to get European goods. The buffalo were disappearing from the plains. The herds were becoming smaller and they had to travel further into the lands of other First Nations to find them. This sometimes caused wars between the different groups of Aboriginal peoples. In some years, there was very little rain and too many grasshoppers. That meant less food for the animals and also, for the people who hunted them. Many were starving.

As a result of these changes, the population of Aboriginal people was becoming less and less. By the 1870s, there were only about 35,000 of them living between the Great Lakes and the Rocky Mountains. Canada wanted to expand west. That meant more changes were coming. Would the First Nations people of the western prairies be able to survive...or would they disappear like the buffalo?
The Last Buffalo

Once, more than thirty million buffalo roamed the Great Plains of North America. These large beasts had no natural enemies. Sometimes, wolves would kill the old or sick among them. The native people of the plains hunted them in large numbers to feed their people. But they knew their lives depended on the buffalo so they honoured them and only killed what they needed. However, by 1885, there were less than 600 buffalo in the wild. Why were the buffalo disappearing from the plains?

The main reason was mass slaughter by American hunters. By the 1850s, many white settlers were moving into the western plains of the United States. They thought the grasslands would be perfect for raising cattle. The buffalo and the Aboriginal peoples who followed them across the plains were in their way. These "cattle barons" had many political friends in Washington. They convinced the American government to destroy the buffalo. Buffalo hunters began to kill entire herds. They would then skin the animal and leave the rest to rot on the land. More buffalo were killed by settlers and railway workers. In less than 45 years, there was almost none left. There has never been such a mass destruction of animals in the history of the human race!

A second cause was the buffalo's own nature. In the face of danger, the buffalo's natural defence was to stand still. The herds were large and no animal wanted to attack such a large group. Gunfire did not make them run in fear. Standing still, they were easy targets for the new rifles that could fire repeating bullets.

The Aboriginal people believed that the main reason the American government destroyed the buffalo was to cut off their food supply. The American army and the Native peoples of the plains were fighting a bloody war. The government was trying to force them off the land and make them live on reservations. Without the buffalo, their main source of food, more of them died from sickness and disease. During these years, the number of native people alive on the American plains fell by nearly 50%: from 500,000 to 270,000. Finally, tired and hungry, they gave up their fight for freedom and surrendered.

In conclusion, mass killing by American hunters, the animal's natural instincts in the face of danger, and the racist actions of the American government against the Aboriginal people almost made the buffalo extinct. Nowadays, buffalo are raised on some cattle farms for their meat. Wild buffalo are protected in many conservation areas of North America. However, the sight of huge herds of buffalo migrating across the plains has disappeared forever.
The second largest group of people living on the Prairies was the Metis. In the 1700s, some French, Scottish, and English fur traders had married Aboriginal women. The mixed-blood descendants of these marriages were called Metis. The Metis population grew. By the 1750s, there were almost 10,000 of them living in Rupert's Land. The largest Metis settlement was along the Red River in what is now southern Manitoba.

The Metis became “a new nation” with a unique culture. However, there were differences among them. Those with a French background were Roman Catholic. Those who had an English or Scottish background were Protestant. Some Métis still believed in the spirits of their First Nations ancestors. Many were bi-lingual. They spoke French or English and First Nations languages. Among themselves, they often spoke their own special language called michif. Some families would send their boys to schools in Britain or Montreal. Girls stayed home and learned the Aboriginal ways of their mothers.

The Metis used First Nations as well as European ways to survive. The buffalo hunt was an important part of Metis life. As the west got more dangerous, they began to hunt for buffalo in larger groups. Many Metis worked for the fur trade companies as trappers, fur traders, interpreters and guides. They also carried furs and other goods from one trading post to another in York boats or Red River carts. The Metis women sold pemmican to people at the trading posts. Many Metis had learned to farm. They had long, narrow farms along the Red River just like French settlers had in Quebec. They grew crops and raised farm animals. They did not have title to their land. At the time, this was not a problem. Later, it would become one.

Metis with Red River cart

Red River Carts were invented by the Metis. They were very good for traveling on the western prairies. They were completely made of wood and could carry a lot of goods.
Europeans were the third largest group living in the western prairies. Most of them had worked for the Hudson Bay Company. There were also clergy from different Christian churches. The largest settlement of Europeans in the western prairies was also along the Red River. The Red River valley had good farmland. Presbyterian Scottish settlers began arriving there in 1810. They called the area Assiniboia. French Catholic farmers from Quebec later moved into Assiniboia. After 1850, English Protestants from Ontario began to settle there as well. At the same time, many Americans were coming from the United States. By 1870, there were 1500 Europeans living in the Red River area. The settlement was a multilingual and multicultural mix of many different groups of people. The Europeans thought their ways were better than the ways of the Aboriginal people and the Metis. They thought they were bringing civilization to a savage land.

Red River Settlement
The Canadian government thought their plan would bring progress or make things better for Canada. Sometimes, progress for one group of people means taking away something that another group thinks is important. Often, this leads to conflict.

**PREDICT:** How do you think the different groups of people in the West will feel about the government’s plan? What conflicts do you think might happen if the government puts its plans into action?
Chapter Five Overview:

In this chapter, you will learn what conflicts happened when the Canadian government began to put its plan for developing the West into action. You will read about how these conflicts were resolved. You will also learn how the solution affected the different groups of people involved.

You will learn the answers to these questions...

- What were the causes and results of the Red River Rebellion?
- How did Canada bring British Columbia into Confederation?
- How did the NWMP bring law and order to the Canadian West?
- How did Canada gain control of Aboriginal lands?
- What were the effects of the treaties and the Indian Act on First Nations people?

You will also think about the different ways people resolve conflicts and what makes a good solution.

Chapter Five: Key Vocabulary

| conflict | solution | surveyors | lots | settlement | title | threaten | petitions | negotiate | provisional government | rebels | privilege | support | treason | execute | firing squad | traitor | hero | amnesty | scrip | recession | Mounties | whiskey | assimilate | Indian status | wards of the state | Indian agent | residential school | tuberculosis | abused |
1. Buying Rupert's Land

Rupert's Land was a very large area of land north and west of the Dominion of Canada. The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) had controlled this land for almost 200 years. In 1868, the government of Canada paid the Hudson's Bay Company $1,500,000.00 for this vast area. On December 1, 1870, it became part of Canada's North-West Territories.

The Canadian government did not want to make any part of this area into a province. It just wanted to make the West a good place for settlers to come and live. First, it sent workers to build a road from Lake Superior to Red River. Second, it sent a group of land surveyors to divide the land around Red River into large squares for farm lots. Third, it made William McDougall the first lieutenant governor of the North-West Territories. McDougall was from Ontario and was anti-French. The Canadian government sent him to Red River to form a new government.

Lieutenant Governor William McDougall, 1869
Source: Canadian Illustrated News, Provincial Archives of Manitoba (N12586)
The Red River settlement was the largest settlement in the Prairies. In 1870, it had a population of 11,963 people. There were 9,700 Metis, 575 First Nations and the rest were Europeans.

The Metis were angry because the Canadian government had not asked them how they felt about its plans for the area. The surveyors were dividing the land into square lots instead of the long, narrow lots they had along the river. Both the French-speaking and English-speaking Metis were afraid to lose their farms because they did not have title to the land. Most of the Metis were French-speaking Catholics. They were worried that English Protestant settlers would come from Ontario and threaten their language, religion and culture. They wanted to protect their way of life. Louis Riel became the leader of the Metis. He was young, bi-lingual, educated and a great speaker.

The Metis wanted Canada to listen to the people of West. They sent petitions to the government. However, the government did not answer. Riel and other Metis decided to take action. They stopped the surveyors from dividing the land. They also stopped the new lieutenant governor from entering the Red River settlement. Then, Riel and about 400 Metis took control of Upper Fort Garry, the most important building in the settlement. They thought they would need the food and weapons at Fort Garry to defend themselves. They took some prisoners and kept them in the fort under guard. Riel wanted a group of people to negotiate with the Canadian government for the good of the whole settlement. Therefore, he formed a provisional government to represent the people of Red River. The members of the provisional government were both French and English speaking people of the settlement.
Riel tried to persuade the European settlers to join the Metis. But most English settlers from Ontario felt that joining Canada would be a good idea. Some of the settlers belonged to the Canada Party. Their leader was John Schultz. They wanted an English Protestant majority in Red River. They did not respect the Metis. Many settlers thought the Metis were rebels and wanted nothing to do with Riel or his provisional government. There was conflict between the two groups of people. The conflict would soon become worse.

Riel and his followers did not think of themselves as rebels. They thought they were protecting the rights of all the people of Red River. Riel and the provisional government made a list of things they wanted from the government of Canada. These are some of the things the Metis of Red River asked for...

**METIS LIST OF RIGHTS**

- the North-West Territories would enter Confederation as a province
- all existing rights, privileges, and customs would not be taken away
- the government would give money to support both Catholic and public schools
- both English and French would be used in government and in the courts
- the lieutenant governor for the new province must speak both English and French
- every male over 21 years of age would be allowed to vote for a legislative assembly to govern the province
When the settlers heard the Metis List of Rights, most of them began to **support** Riel. Finally, the Canadian government agreed to listen. Canada sent Donald Smith to make a deal with the Metis leaders. However, during the meetings, some prisoners escaped from Upper Fort Garry. Thomas Scott was one of them. He would soon change the history of Canada.

Thomas Scott was an Orangeman from Ireland and a member of the Canada Party. He hated Catholics and the Metis. Scott, Schultz and others wanted to attack Riel and his provisional government. However, Riel stopped them and put Scott back into prison. Scott began fighting with his guards and making trouble in the prison. The provisional government put Scott on **trial for treason** and found him guilty. They wanted him put to death. Riel wanted the Canadian government to take him seriously. He said, "We must make Canada respect us." He finally gave the order. Scott was **executed by a firing squad**. Many have called this the biggest mistake of Riel's life!

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*This is an artist's image of the execution of Thomas Scott. What details are not true? How does the image show the artist's feelings about Riel, Thomas Scott, and the execution? How would this image affect the feelings of the different groups of people living in Canada - the Metis, the French, the English?*
Results of the Red River Rebellion

The Canadian government finally agreed to many of the things in the Metis List of Rights. In the Manitoba Act of 1870, the government of Canada made the following promises:

THE MANITOBA ACT, 1870

- the small area around Red River would become the new province of Manitoba
- there would be an elected assembly (1/2 English, 1/2 French)
- both English and French would be used in the government and in the courts
- the government would pay for separate Catholic and Protestant schools but NOT for separate English and French schools
- the Metis would get 500,000 hectares of land to live on and farm

In 1870, Manitoba became Canada's fifth province. It was a small province with about 25,000 people living there. Because of its shape and small size, it was called the "postage stamp" province.
The people of Canada had different feelings about Louis Riel. English Canadians thought Riel was a **traitor**. He had acted against the government of Canada. They were angry over the shooting of Scott. They wanted to charge Riel with Scott's murder. French Canada did not think Riel was a traitor. They thought he was a **hero**. He had helped to create the province of Manitoba and protect the Metis way of life. How could the government of Canada make both groups happy? It promised **amnesty** to the Metis rebels if they stopped fighting ...but not for Riel. Canada sent soldiers under Colonel Wolseley to Red River. They were supposed to end the rebellion and capture Riel. However, before the soldiers came, Riel escaped to the United States.

What happened to the Metis of Red River? As time passed, more Europeans arrived. The main way of life of the new province became the way of life of the English-speaking white people. In the Manitoba Act, the government had promised the Metis land to live on. However, most of the Metis never got their land. This is because the government had given each family a coupon, called **scrip**. They could exchange this scrip for a piece of land. But, the Metis did not understand the value of their scrip and sold it for almost nothing. Without land or money, most of the Metis moved further west and settled in what is now Saskatchewan. The time would soon come when they would have to fight for their rights once again...and once again, Riel would lead them.

**The Metis move west...**

*The Caron family left Manitoba in 1871. They finally settled in Batoche, Saskatchewan.*
Before 1873, British Columbia was still a colony of Britain. It was far away from the rest of Canada. It had a small population. Before 1858, there were about 40,000 First Nations people and only a few hundred Europeans. Most of the Europeans were British and lived on Vancouver Island. In 1858, gold was found in the Fraser River canyon. In 1862, more gold was found in the Cariboo region. Thousands of miners came from many countries. The population of the colony grew very quickly. The government of British Columbia spent a lot of money building roads into the "gold" mountains. However, the gold ran out and most of the miners left. There was a recession and the colony was in a lot of debt.

Some people thought joining the United States would be good for British Columbia. There were almost 40,000,000 people in the United States whereas Canada's population was less than 6,000,000. There were many railways in the U.S. that could carry people and trade goods to big cities across the United States. Canada did not have a railway to British Columbia. Building a railway through the Rocky Mountains would be very difficult.

Other people wanted British Columbia to be part of Canada. Most of them were British who still wanted ties with their "mother" country. Amor de Cosmos, a newspaper editor, helped start the Confederation League. This League tried to convince the people of British Columbia to join Confederation. It wanted British Columbia to have responsible government just like the other provinces of Canada.

In 1870, there was a Great Confederation Debate in British Columbia to decide its future. The First Nations were not asked to participate. Canada promised to ...

- make British Columbia a province with an elected legislature
- pay all of British Columbia’s debts
- begin to build a railway across British Columbia within the next two years
- finish a railway from Ontario to the Pacific Ocean within the next 10 years

The pro-Confederation side won the debate. On July 20, 1871, British Columbia became Canada's sixth province. Canada now stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. Would Canada be able to keep its promises? You will find the answer in the next chapter.
3. Bringing Law and Order to the West: the NWMP

The Canadian government thought Canada needed a police force in the West to make it a safer place for settlers to live. In 1873, it created the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP). A year later, 300 police in bright red uniforms went west. They built forts in different parts of the North-West Territories like Fort Macleod, Fort Saskatchewan, Fort Calgary, and Fort Walsh. By 1876, the "Mounties" had brought peace and order to the Northwest Territories.

They solved two very important problems...

1. American whiskey traders and wolf hunters were coming across the border into what is now southern Alberta. They built forts and traded cheap alcohol to the First Nations for furs. The drinking was causing a lot of violence and death. In 1873, 16 wolf hunters killed more than 20 Assiniboine natives at Cypress Hills because they thought one of the Natives had stolen a horse. The NWMP stopped the whiskey trade and ended the violence.

2. The American Army was fighting bloody "Indian Wars" with First Nations people in the American west because First Nations people did not want to live on reservations. Canada did not want the same thing to happen in the Canadian West. The NWMP gained the trust of the First Nations people. They told them living on reservations would be good for their people.

Crowfoot was a powerful chief in the Blackfoot Confederacy. When he signed Treaty 7 with the Canadian government, he said...

If the police had not come to this country, where would we all be now? Bad men and whiskey were killing us so fast that very few of us would have been left today. The Mounted Police have protected us as the feathers of the bird protect it from the frosts of winter.

In the next chapter, you will learn how the NWMP solved more problems as Canada developed.
4. Gaining Control of Aboriginal Lands Through Treaties

Aboriginal peoples were stopping Europeans from settling on land in the Prairies. The government wanted First Nations people to sign treaties. The treaties said they would give up their land and live on reservations. The First Nations did not want to lose their land or their freedom. However, they knew that more settlers would come and they were not powerful enough to fight them. They thought signing the treaties would let them keep some of their own way of life. With no buffalo, they were starving. Diseases like smallpox were killing them in large numbers. If they signed the treaty, the government promised to take care of them. The government said it would teach them how to farm so they could grow their own food to eat. The First Nations people felt they had no choice. One by one, the First Nations of the western prairies signed away their land.

The "Numbered" Treaties

Eight treaties were signed between 1871 and 1908 with different groups of First Nations people in western Canada. They were "numbered" so people would not be confused. The map below shows the land given away by each treaty.
The promises were different in each treaty. However, in most of the treaties...

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- land on the reservation to live on (e.g. 600 square meters for each family of 5)</td>
<td>- to give up their land &quot;forever&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- First Nations could hunt and fish on reserve land NOT used for lumbering, mining or settlement</td>
<td>- to obey laws and keep the peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to give money to each First Nations person every year (e.g. Treaty 6: $5.00/year)</td>
<td>- not to use liquor on the reservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to give them farming tools, seeds, and farm animals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to build a school on the reservation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PREDICT:**

Will Canada keep its promises?

Was this a good solution for the government of Canada?

Was this a good solution for First Nations' people?

How do you think the treaties will affect First Nations' way of life?
The Indian Act, 1876

The Canadian government wanted the First Nations people to assimilate. It wanted them to forget their culture, language and traditions and learn to live a British way of life. In 1876, Canada passed a law called the Indian Act. The Indian Act gave the Canadian government control of the lives of all First Nations people. First of all, the Act defined Indian status -- who was a First Nations person and who was not.

Who had Indian status?

- Only "full blooded" First Nations' people could have Indian status. The Metis were not full blooded so they did not have Indian status.
- A First Nations' woman lost her Indian status if she married a non-First Nations man.
- A First Nations' man did not lose his Indian status if he married a non-First Nations' woman. The non-First Nations woman gained Indian status.
- If a First Nations went to university, he or she lost Indian status.

Here are some other things the Act said:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Nations people who lived on a reservation...</th>
<th>First Nations people who did not live on a reservation....</th>
<th>The Canadian government could..</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ must have Indian status</td>
<td>➢ would not get welfare from the government</td>
<td>➢ let companies cut trees on the reserves and sell the wood BUT First Nations people would not get the money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ would get welfare from the government</td>
<td>➢ could be a Canadian citizen and vote IF they gave up their Indian status</td>
<td>➢ let the Court of Canada make decisions about First Nations people who broke the law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ could not be a Canadian citizen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ could not vote</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ could not drink alcohol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effects of Treaties and the Indian Act on Aboriginal Life

The treaties and the Indian Act caused the First Nations people to lose their land, their freedom and their culture. First, they had to live on lands put aside for them by the Canadian government and learn how to grow crops. However, the reserve lands were often the poorest areas for farming and they were not taught how to use the farming tools. As time passed, the reservations became smaller because the government took land away for settlers, roads, railway lines or for its natural resources.

Second, the Indian Act made First Nations people wards of the state and gave the government control of every part of their lives. The government sent an Indian Agent to make decisions for them instead of their traditional chiefs. They had to ask the Indian Agent for food, clothing, farming tools and everything they needed. They also had to ask the Agent for permission to leave the reservation or sell their crops. In addition, they were forbidden to practice traditions like the "pow wow", the "sun dance" and the "potlatch". These traditions were very important to their culture.

Third, language and cultural differences created many misunderstandings about the treaty promises. For instance, the Canadian government made some oral promises that were not written down in the treaties. First Nations people have an oral tradition. They believe oral promises must be kept. However, Europeans believe only written promises are binding. Also, those who signed the treaties had different ideas about what was being promised. For example, in Treaty 6, the Canadian government promised to keep a medicine chest in the home of the Indian Agent for the use of First Nations people. The First Nations people thought that this meant the government would give them health care. Furthermore, many of the government's written promises were not fulfilled. Today, the Canadian government and the First Nations people are trying to settle treaty claims. They hope to repair some of the damage caused by the government's broken promises.
Harder to repair is the damage caused by **residential schools** on the Aboriginal people. Between 1870 and 1996, over 150,000 First Nations, Metis and Inuit children from 5 to 16 years old were taken away from their parents and forced to live in schools far away from their homes. The Canadian government and the Christian churches ran these schools. The children were given new names. They could not speak their own language or follow their Aboriginal traditions. If they did, their teachers would punish them. Many children got sick from tuberculosis. Many were physically and sexually **abused**. Some died. Others ran away. When the children returned home, they felt like a stranger in their own family and community. Many lost their identity and became strangers to themselves.

On June 11, 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said Canada was sorry for the terrible things residential schools had done to Aboriginal peoples. The last school closed in Saskatchewan in 1996 but First Nations are still suffering from the effects of residential schools on their people.
Chapter Five: Summary

The Canadian government took many steps to prepare the West for settlement. First, it bought Rupert's Land and sent road builders and surveyors to divide the land for settlers. However, the government did not speak to the people who lived there about its plans. The Metis wanted to protect their land and culture so they rebelled. When Louis Riel's provisional government executed Thomas Scott, Canada sent soldiers to put down the rebellion. However, Riel escaped to the United States. Canada agreed to make Manitoba a province of Canada but the Metis lost their land.

Second, the government tried to convince British Columbia to join Confederation by promising to build a transcontinental railway within 10 years. After a Great Confederation Debate, the majority of people in British Columbia agreed to become part of Canada.

Third, Canada created the North-West Mounted Police to bring law and order to the Canadian West. The NWMP stopped the violence from the whiskey trade and made friends with the First Nations people. They helped persuade the starving Aboriginal peoples to sign treaties with the Canadian government.

Fourth, Canada signed eight numbered treaties with the First Nations people of the western plains. In the treaties, the First Nations people gave up their land and agreed to live on reservations in exchange for help from the Canadian government. The Canadian government also passed the Indian Act in 1876. This Act made First Nations people wards of the state. It also gave the government of Canada power to control every part of their lives. The government tried to assimilate the First Nations people by taking away their children and putting them in residential schools. Today, the First Nations people still suffer the consequences of these government actions.
Chapter Six Overview:

Canada had promised British Columbia it would build a **transcontinental** railway. In this chapter, you will learn how the government of Canada accomplished this enormous task. You will also learn how the government's broken promises made another conflict explode in the Canadian West. Finally, you will read about other things that helped to develop the Canadian West.

You will learn the answers to these questions...

- How did the Canadian Pacific Railway help Canada grow?
- What happened in the North-West Rebellion?
  - the causes
  - the leaders
  - the main events
  - the results
- How did Canada try to encourage settlers to come to the Canadian West?
- Why did Canada need to create another territory?

Chapter Six Key Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>contract</th>
<th>imports</th>
<th>homestead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bribery</td>
<td>battles</td>
<td>policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scandal</td>
<td>militia</td>
<td>protective tariffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resign</td>
<td>guerrilla warfare</td>
<td>imports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bog</td>
<td>ambush</td>
<td>resistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>labourers</td>
<td>retreat</td>
<td>strain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>construction</td>
<td>ammunition</td>
<td>prospectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strikes</td>
<td>surrender</td>
<td>customs duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explosives</td>
<td></td>
<td>saloon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transcontinental</td>
<td></td>
<td>stake a claim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spike</td>
<td></td>
<td>compensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speculators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1871, the Canadian government had promised British Columbia it would build a railway between Ontario and the Pacific Ocean within ten years. Many people thought this would be impossible. Private companies did not want to lose their money trying to complete such a difficult job. John A. Macdonald, the Prime Minister of Canada, needed to convince them. He offered them government money and free land. This could make a company very rich. Soon, many companies wanted the contract to build the railway. Which company would the Canadian government choose?

In 1872, there was an election in Canada. John A. Macdonald's Conservative Party needed money to help it win the election. Sir Hugh Allan was a very rich man who owned a railway company. He gave the Conservative party $300,000 (worth $7 million today). The Conservatives won the election. Macdonald's government gave Allan's company the contract to build the railway across the Canadian West. Many people thought Macdonald's government was guilty of bribery.

This created a scandal for the government. Macdonald had to resign as Prime Minister and call another election in 1874. Because of this Pacific Scandal, the Conservatives lost the election.

The Liberals came to power and Alexander Mackenzie became the new Prime Minister. Canada had economic problems to solve so the Liberal Party was not very interested in railway building. Therefore, there was very little railroad construction during the next few years.

In this cartoon, Mackenzie faces Macdonald. Macdonald is saying...

"I admit I took the money and bribed the electors with it. Is there anything wrong about that?"
In 1878, Macdonald's Conservative Party returned to power. Macdonald gave a new contract for building the railway to the Canadian Pacific Railway company (CPR). Canada promised the CPR...

- $25,000,000 in cash and $35,000,000 in loans
- 25 million acres of land
- 1,100 km of railway lines already built in eastern Canada
- no other company could build railway lines south of the CPR lines for 20 years
- no property taxes for 20 years

Building a railway across Canada was a big job. It needed people in charge who knew a lot about railways. In 1882, William Van Horne became the manager of the CPR. He was "the boss of everybody and everything". He supervised the building of the railway line from Ontario to Calgary. It had to go across the rock and bog of the Canadian Shield and over the prairies. By 1883, this part of the railway was finished.

There were thousands of labourers working for the CPR. The construction camps were rough places. There was a lot of drinking and gambling that led to violence. The North West Mounted Police began to follow the construction workers. They stopped the gambling and drinking. They even helped to settle strikes between the workers and the railway companies. They kept peace and order so the railway could be finished sooner.

Railway building in British Columbia was a very dangerous job. Andrew Onderdonk was in charge of construction there. There were not enough workers in British Columbia. He had to bring in almost 7,000 immigrant workers from China. By 1885, there were 15,000 Chinese working on the railway. They did most of the dangerous work...blasting the mountains with explosives, making tunnels through the hard granite rock, working high on the mountain cliffs. More than 600 Chinese workers died doing this dangerous work. The Chinese worker was paid $1 a day. This was much less than the Canadian worker ($1.50 to $2.50 a day). They also had to pay more for their food and supplies. Many suffered from hunger, cold, sickness and racism.

Finally, on November 7, 1885 Canada's transcontinental railway was finished! Donald Smith had given a lot of money to build the CPR. He drove in the last spike.
Railway building had brought thousands of Chinese immigrants to Canada. When the railway was finished, the Canadian government did not want the Chinese to stay in Canada. In 1885, Canada began to charge a "head tax" of $50 on every Chinese person coming to Canada. In 1900, the "head tax" became $100/person and in 1902, it increased to $500/person (worth $20,000 today). This stopped Chinese men from bringing their families to Canada. Nonetheless, 5,000 Chinese stayed in Canada to live.

Many people feel that the Canadian Pacific Railway was one of Canada's greatest achievements. It helped Canada survive as a country. The CPR...

- united Canada by bringing together faraway places
- made the United States understand that the land north of the American border belonged to Canada
- carried people, mail and goods across Canada easier and faster
- increased trade between eastern and western Canada
- brought settlers further into the Canadian West. In 1881, there were only 7,000 settlers in western Canada. By 1885, the population had climbed to over 23,000
- helped towns develop along the main railway line. For example, Winnipeg became an important city because it was "the gateway to the West" for immigrants. Vancouver's population also grew because it was at the end of the railway line.
- affected the value of land. Land close to the railway lines became more valuable than land further away. Land speculators began to buy land around railway routes and sell it for more money. This made them very rich.
- carried soldiers to areas of conflict... like the North-West Rebellion about to explode on the Western plains...
What were the causes of the North West Rebellion?

The Metis were unhappy. Many of the Metis had left Manitoba in the 1870s and had settled along the Saskatchewan Rivers. In 1882, the government sent surveyors to divide the land for settlers. Once again, the Metis did not have title to their land. They did not want to lose it once more. They had sent 15 petitions to the Canadian government asking for title to their land. The government had not answered. In addition, many Metis were having a hard time making a living. Before the CPR was built, they had transported goods to eastern Canada in canoes, York boats and Red River carts. Now, the CPR had taken over this job. Some Metis had started to grow wheat to sell to eastern Canada. However, Canada was having a recession and the price of wheat was falling. The Canadian government was not helping them.

The First Nations people living in the area were also unhappy. The Canadian government was not keeping its treaty promises to them. The government had promised to take care of their needs. But, it had spent its money building the railway. It began to give First Nations people less food to eat. There were not enough animals to hunt on the reserve lands. It was very difficult for the First Nations people to learn to farm without help and support. As a result, between 1880 and 1885, 3,000 First Nations died of starvation. They were beginning to understand what life on the reservation was like. They blamed the government for taking away their traditional way of life and not keeping its promises.

The European settlers moving into the area were also unhappy. First of all, it was taking too long to get their land surveyed. The land had to be surveyed before they could prove they owned it. Second, to help Canada’s economy, Macdonald had put high tariffs (taxes) on some imports. This meant the settlers had to pay more for manufactured goods from Central Canada. Third, the CPR was charging too much money to transport the goods to the West. The settlers thought this was unfair.

In the spring of 1884, a small group of Metis, led by Gabriel Dumont, rode south across the border into the United States. Their mission: find Riel and bring him back to lead the Metis once more. Riel thought God had chosen him to be a "prophet of the New World". When he returned, he sent a final petition to the government. In March, 1885, Riel formed a provisional government for Saskatchewan and put together a small army. What would the Canadian government do this time?
**Who were the Leaders of the North West Rebellion?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gabriel Dumont:</th>
<th>Louis Riel:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• French-speaking Metis</td>
<td>• French-speaking Metis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• born in Red River area in 1837</td>
<td>• born in Red River in 1844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a good hunter and leader of the buffalo hunt</td>
<td>• worked in Montreal as a law clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• could speak six languages but could not read or write</td>
<td>• led Red River Rebellion, 1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• led Metis in battles at Duck Lake, Fish Creek and Batoche</td>
<td>• escaped to United States and lived there (on and off) from 1870-1884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• escaped to United States and joined Wild West Show</td>
<td>• spent time in mental hospital in Quebec from 1876-1878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• moved back to Canada and died in Batoche in 1906</td>
<td>• led North-West rebellion in Saskatchewan in 1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• never fired a shot from his gun in the rebellions</td>
<td>• never fired a shot from his gun in the rebellions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• found guilty of treason and hanged in 1885</td>
<td>• found guilty of treason and hanged in 1885</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitikwahanaplwlyin (Poundmaker):</th>
<th>Mistahimaskwa (Big Bear):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• born in Battleford, Saskatchewan in 1842</td>
<td>• born in Northwest Territories in 1825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• grew up with Plains Cree but adopted by Crowfoot, chief of Blackfoot</td>
<td>• great warrior and chief of mixed band of Ojibwa and Cree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• good speaker, leader and peacemaker</td>
<td>• tried to unite Cree bands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• signed Treaty #6 and settled his people peacefully on reservations</td>
<td>• asked government for reservations that were beside one another but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• stopped First Nations fighters from killing Canadian soldiers in North-West</td>
<td>government said no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebellion</td>
<td>• worked for peace during Northwest Rebellion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• put in prison for treason but let go when he got sick with tuberculosis</td>
<td>• put in prison for treason but let go when he got sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• died on Blackfoot reservation in 1886</td>
<td>• died in 1888 on Poundmaker reservation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What did the Canadian government do?

This time, John A. Macdonald and his government acted quickly. Macdonald ordered 8,000 soldiers and volunteers to go west to fight Riel and his rebels. The Canadian Pacific Railway brought the soldiers and supplies to the West. They were there in less than 10 days! These men led the Canadian soldiers in the battles that followed...

Sir Frederick Dobson Middleton:
- born in 1825 in Belfast, Ireland
- served in many parts of British Empire
- commander of Canada's militia
- fought against Metis at Fish Creek and Batoche
- made a knight by Queen Victoria
- Canadian government gave him gift of $20,000
- in 1890, resigned as leader of militia when he was accused of stealing furs from a Metis during rebellion
- died in England in 1898

William Dillon Otter:
- born in 1843 in Goderich, Ontario
- helped defend Canada in Fenian raids, 1866
- sent to West to help Middleton stop Northwest Rebellion in 1885
- led government soldiers against Poundmaker's Cree at Cut Knife Hill but lost battle
- served in South African war and World War 1
- first Canadian to become head of Canadian army
- made a knight in 1913 and a general in 1923
- died in 1929

Major General Thomas Bland Strange:
- born in 1831 in India
- served in Caribbean and India
- trained Canadian militia in Quebec and Kingston
- retired to Alberta to raise horses
  -->complained that Blackfoot were stealing his horses
- organized small group of cowboys and mounted police against Big Bear and Plains Cree
- fought with Big Bear and Plains Cree at Frenchman's Butte but retreated because militia not experienced enough to fight Cree
- returned to England in 1887
- died in 1925
## What were the main events of the North-West Rebellion?

### Battles...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Battle of Duck Lake</th>
<th>Frog Lake Massacre:</th>
<th>Battle at Fish Creek:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 26, 1885</td>
<td>April 2, 1885</td>
<td>April 24, 1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about 100 NWMP and volunteers fought with 300 Cree and Metis fighters led by Dumont</td>
<td>some starving Plains Cree warriors (led by Wandering Spirit) attacked Frog Lake and took Indian Agent Thomas Quinn prisoner because he had treated Cree badly</td>
<td>150 First Nations and Metis fighters led by Dumont surprised about 400 government soldiers under General Middleton in ambush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumont used <em>guerilla warfare</em></td>
<td>Quinn refused to go with them --&gt; Quinn and 8 other white people killed</td>
<td>many of Dumont's forces left so Riel had to send more men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after half hour of fighting, NWMP and volunteers retreated</td>
<td>warriors found guilty of murder and hanged after rebellion</td>
<td>ten soldiers killed &amp; 45 wounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 officers and volunteers died</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 Metis killed &amp; 3 wounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumont hurt &amp; 6 rebels killed (including Dumont's brother)</td>
<td></td>
<td>both sides <em>retreated</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and more battles...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Battle of Cut Knife Hill:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• May 2, 1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 350 government soldiers (led by Colonel Otter) attacked 50 Cree and Assiniboine fighters (led by war chief, Fine Day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strong fighting made government soldiers retreat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poundmaker told fighters not to follow, saving many lives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Battle of Batoche:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• May 9 - May 12, 1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 900 soldiers (led by General Middleton) attacked 300 Metis, Cree and Dakota fighters (led by Dumont and Riel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Metis ran out of ammunition and surrendered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 21 Metis died in battle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Riel arrested and Dumont escaped to United States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Battle of Frenchman's Butte:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• May 28, 1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• starving Cree (led by Big Bear) took food and supplies from white settlements and captured Fort Pitt, taking prisoners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• about 1,000 soldiers (led by Major General Strange) and NWMP went to recapture Fort Pitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cree fought with soldiers and NWMP on hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--&gt;Canadians retreated to Fort Pitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--&gt;Cree and Big Bear escaped but were caught later</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What were the results of the North-West Rebellion?

The North-West Rebellion lasted only three months. There were too many soldiers to fight. They had more and better weapons. The Metis and First Nations people finally had to surrender. Almost 200 people had died. The rebellion had cost the government of Canada over $5,000,000. What would happen to the rebels? What other effects would the rebellion have on Canada?

- Louis Riel was found guilty of treason by an Ontario judge and an English-speaking jury. He was hanged on November 16, 1885. This divided French and English Canada even more. Many English Canadians felt Riel got what he deserved for leading two rebellions against Canada. However, French Canadians were very angry. They felt Riel was hanged because he was French-speaking and Roman Catholic. Some believed Riel was insane and should go to a mental hospital.

- Eight First Nations people were hanged. Poundmaker and Big Bear were put in prison. Canada was afraid the First Nations people would become violent again. The NWMP took away their guns, horses, and carts. It became more difficult to leave the reservation. The lives of First Nations people became even more miserable.

- The lives of the Metis people also became worse. The government and white settlers thought they were troublemakers and treated them badly. Many Metis left Saskatchewan and moved further northwest near Yukon River. Would they be safe there?

- The people of Canada realized the CPR was very important for Canada's defence. Therefore, Macdonald's government got the money to finish building the railway line to British Columbia.
6. Bringing More Settlers to the Canadian West

Success for Government!

- bought Rupert's land from the Hudson's Bay Company
- convinced British Columbia to be part of Canada
- made treaties with First Nations people. The First Nations had given up their lands and were living on reservations under the government's control
- brought law and order. The NWMP policed the West and helped the Canadian government stop two rebellions.
- finished the Canadian Pacific Railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific.
- surveyed much of the land and divided it into square lots.

The West was ready for settlers. What kind of settlers did Canada want in the Canadian West? Most of all, Canada wanted English-speaking people from eastern Canada, Britain or the United States. Canada also thought immigrants from northern and western Europe would make good farmers. They could live in a cold climate and assimilate easily.

How could Canada encourage these immigrants to come and live on Canada's western plains? In 1872, the Macdonald's Conservative government passed the Dominion Lands Act. This is what the Act said...

**THE DOMINION LANDS ACT, 1872**

Settlers could get 160 acres of free land if they promised to...
- stay on the land for at least 3 years
- improve the land in some way (e.g. build a house, dig a well, put up a fence, clear some trees)
- pay $10.00 to register the land ($150.00 today)
However, even with the offer of free land, the population of settlers in the West grew slowly. Not many European immigrants were interested in coming to Canada in the 1870s and 1880s. The United States, Brazil, Argentina, Australia and New Zealand seemed like better places to live. There were many reasons for this. Life on the Canadian prairie was very difficult. Many did not survive the journey to their homestead. Prairie soil was good for farming but it was hard to break. The summer growing season was short and the winters were long and cold. Grasshoppers attacked crops and mosquitoes attacked people. To make things worse, Canada and the rest of the world was in an economic recession in the 1870s. Farmers could not get a good price for their crops. Between 1870 and 1900, over one million people left Canada for the United States.

Nonetheless, a steady stream of immigrants came to settle in the prairies. In 1875, almost 300 settlers from Iceland came to Manitoba looking for a place where they could fish and build their own community. They settled on the western shore of Lake Winnipeg and called the area "New Iceland". In the summer of 1876, 1,200 more new immigrants came when volcanoes destroyed their homes in Iceland. However, in their first years in Canada, cold winters and natural disasters like floods and smallpox killed many of them. Those that survived needed help from the government. Therefore, Canada created the District of Keewatin and appointed a council to govern it.

Also in the 1870s, thousands of German-speaking Mennonites came from Russia and also settled in southern Manitoba. The Mennonites were peace-loving farmers. They believed it was wrong to kill. Russia was putting Mennonites in prison because they did not want to fight for the Czar. Canada promised them free land and the right to their own religion. Canada also promised them they would not have to fight in the Canadian military. By the end of the 1870s, there were close to 9,000 Mennonites living in their own communities in Manitoba. They built mud and stick houses with thick straw roofs and turned swampy bush into good farmland.

It would take many years before this steady stream of new immigrants became a flood…
John A. Macdonald and his Conservative party had a new plan to help Canada’s economy. His new plan, the National Policy, helped the Conservative Party win the election in 1878. One part of his National Policy was to put **protective tariffs** (taxes) on imported goods from other countries that competed with Canadian goods. The tariffs made these **imports** more expensive and helped businesses in Canada to expand. People moved from farms to cities to work in the new factories. The population of many Canadian cities grew. The extra taxes also helped the government get more money to build the transcontinental railway. The protective tariffs were good for Central Canada but they were not good for Western farmers. They had to pay a higher price for the things they needed.

However, life would soon become better for the Western farmer. In the 1850s, some Western farmers had begun planting a new kind of spring wheat on the Canada’s prairies. Red Fife wheat ripened earlier than other kinds of wheat, was more **resistant** to a disease called "rust", and was good for making flour and baking. In 1906, Canada developed another new **strain** of wheat called "Marquis" wheat. It ripened eight days faster than Red Fife wheat, could take heavy wind, and made excellent bread. These new strains of wheat grew well in the climate of Canada’s western prairies. When the recession ended, the price of wheat began to rise. Canada’s farmers could now make money. In the 1890s, new immigrants began to flood the western prairies. In Unit 3, you will learn more about these new immigrants and how they helped Canada become "the bread basket of the world".
Canada Creates a New Territory...

In 1896, gold was discovered in the Klondike region in what is now Yukon territory. It was the richest single gold discovery in human history! Between 1890 and 1897, 100,000 gold seekers from Canada, the United States and many other parts of the world rushed to the region, hoping to get rich. Only 30,000 got to the gold fields.

There were three routes to the gold fields. The rich got on a ship and went all the way by water around Alaska to Dawson City. The poor took a boat to Skagway, Alaska and then traveled across the mountains to the very steep White Pass or Chilkoot Pass. The steep mountains, dangerous rivers and freezing temperatures killed many hopeful prospectors and thousands of horses. At the top of the White Pass and Chilkoot Pass, the NWMP were waiting to collect customs duties and make sure all obeyed the law. No one was allowed to carry a gun. Everyone had to bring a year’s worth of food as well as tools, tents and other supplies. Each person’s supplies weighed one ton! When the gold seeker reached Lake Bennett, he or she had to build a boat to travel 500 miles down the Yukon River to the gold fields. Many drowned before they got there.

Some gold seekers took a third route from Edmonton overland through the northern wilderness. This was the longest and most difficult route. It took two years to reach the Klondike using this "all Canadian route"! By the time they arrived, the gold rush was almost over.
The gold fields were near Dawson City. In 1896, Dawson City did not exist. Three years later, it had a population of 20,000. This made it the largest city in western Canada. It had telephones, running water, luxury hotels and electricity! Most people in Dawson City were men but there were a few women. Most of the women worked in the many saloons, gambling rooms and dance halls of the gold-hungry city.

The government of Canada wanted control over the thousands of people coming into the area. Many of the gold seekers were American. Canada wanted to make sure the United States would not try to make this area part of Alaska. Therefore, it divided the North-West Territories to create a new territory - Yukon Territory. Canada appointed a commissioner and a council to make decisions for the new territory. The North-West Mounted Police under their commander, Sam Steele, kept order in the region.

In 1898, Dawson City became the capital of Yukon Territory. Today, Dawson City is no longer the capital of Yukon Territory. It now has less than 2,000 people living there. Many tourists visit the town to see its historic buildings and to remember its golden days.

By 1904, the Klondike gold rush was over. More than $100 million in gold had been mined. The rich were the ones who had staked the first claims. Most of the gold seekers left poor and disappointed. The rest of the gold lay deep in the ground. Later, large companies with powerful machines came to mine the gold from the rock.

The people who had suffered the most from the gold rush were the First Nations people who had lived there for centuries: the northern Athapaskans, Tagish, and the Han. The Han had lived in the area where Dawson City was born. When the gold seekers rushed into the area, the Han became homeless in their own homeland. Their culture was almost completely destroyed. First Nations’ hunting and fishing areas had been trampled by gold prospectors. Their forests had been burned. Their rivers had been poisoned by chemicals. Many were dying of smallpox and others were near starvation. These changes almost made the Han an extinct people. Today, the First Nations people of the area are asking the government for compensation for what they lost in the gold rush.
Map of Canada, 1898
| **NWMP** | In 1874, the first 300 North West Mounted Police officers left eastern Canada in their bright red uniforms for the western prairies. Between 1874 and 1920, they kept law and order in the Canadian North-West. They gained respect and an excellent reputation throughout the world. People said, "The Mounties always get their man."

**The NWMP:**
- stopped the whiskey trade and the violence it brought
- kept peace between the different groups of First Nations people
- made friends with the First Nations people and persuaded them to sign treaties with the Canadian government
- helped put down the Red River and North-West Rebellion
- policed the railway lines and the construction workers that were building them
- settled strikes during railway construction
- kept law and order during the Klondike Gold Rush and made sure people had enough food and supplies
- protected the settlers coming West and policed the settlements |

| **RCMP** | In 1920, the NWMP and the Dominion Police joined together to become the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) The RCMP is a federal police force. There are now almost 25,000 RCMP officers. They are responsible for making sure people follow federal laws from the Atlantic to the Pacific. They help protect Canada's national boundaries and international security. In some provinces or cities, they are the only police force. In 1975, the first females in the RCMP graduated from training. In 1990, Sikhs in the RCMP were allowed to wear turbans. In 1991, the first all-Aboriginal troop graduated from training. More than 190 First Nations now work with the RCMP. |
Today, there are about 390,000 Metis living in Canada. For over 100 years, they have tried to make the Canadian government recognize them as a distinct nation. Finally, in 1982, the Metis were recognized as one of the three Aboriginal Peoples of Canada (Inuit, First Nations and Metis). In 1983, the Metis National Council was formed to give the Metis a bigger voice in determining their own future. In 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada said the Metis could have the same rights as other Aboriginal peoples of Canada. These are some famous Metis people today...

Maria Campbell
- award winning author & playwright
- brought the story of the Metis people to the eyes and ears of the world

Todd Ducharme
- Canada's first Metis judge
- received Master of Law at Yale Law School

Sheldon Souray
- NHL defenceman
- played for Edmonton Oilers

Paul Martin
- former Prime Minister of Canada
- former leader of Liberal Party
- former Minister of Finance
Chapter Six: Summary

In this chapter, you learned about more steps Canada took to develop the west and the conflicts that resulted. After the Pacific Scandal, Macdonald's Conservative party gave the contract for building a transcontinental railway to the Canadian Pacific Railway company. Thousands of Chinese immigrants, the NWMP and great railway builders such as William Van Horne, Andrew Onderdonk and Donald Smith made it possible for the CPR to finish the railway in 1885.

When the government sent surveyors to the area around the Saskatchewan Rivers, conflict exploded between the Metis and First Nations people and the Canadian government. It took the Canadian soldiers and NWMP less than three months to defeat the rebels. However, the North-West Rebellion had many negative effects. Their leader, Louis Riel, was hanged for treason. This divided the French and English people of Canada. Also, the lives of the First Nations people and Metis became much worse.

The government tried to bring settlers to the West by offering free homesteads to immigrants. Immigrants from Iceland and Mennonites from Russia came to live in their own communities in Manitoba. The government also put protective tariffs on imported goods that competed with Canadian goods. These tariffs were good for manufacturing businesses in Central Canada but not good for western farmers. However, new strains of wheat helped improve the life of prairie farmers.

When gold was discovered in the Klondike, a new territory was created so Canada could have control over the thousands of people rushing to the area. Dawson City became the new capital of Yukon Territory. The prospectors left soon after but the lives of the First Nations people who continued to live there would never be the same.