

Fun with Drama



A Collection of Plays from Métis Stories



Volume 5

Margaret Tourond-Townson



A MESSAGE FROM THE AUTHOR

This is a special volume to me personally. It's about the history of my father, my great grandmother and the Métis people from Saskatchewan and Manitoba!

Many thanks to my cousin Henri Paulhus who helped me get into the lives of our Métis ancestors in Red River Métis on the Move and After the Battle of Batoche. The assistance of Darren Préfontaine from the Gabriel Dumont Institute has been invaluable and much appreciated.

The planning of the Fun With Drama web site and the background material about the history of the Métis has been greatly enriched by a fabulous interview with Rose Fleury a respected Elder from the Métis community in Duck Lake.

Clint Buehler, composer of the Métis National Anthem has kindly given permission to quote the refrain for the finale of "Métis on the Move!"

"Marci"!

Margaret Tourond-Townson

Diary photograph: courtesy of Bartek Ambrozik, stock.xchng

Photograph of Josephine Tourond in front of her house: David Townson of antique photograph

Images courtesy of the Gabriel Dumont Institute (www.metismuseum.ca): drawing page 26 and map page 25.

Following images courtesy of the Saskatchewan Archives Board: Battlefield of Fish Creek, page 30; and 1st Shot Battle of Batoche, page 33.

Thanks to Clint Buehler for permission to use the refrain from the Métis Anthem in "Métis on the Move".

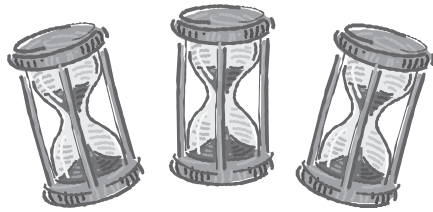
Copyright © Margaret Tourond-Townson Publications 2009.

ISBN 0-9694069-1-6

1465 Kamouraska Circle
Ottawa (Ontario)
Canada K1C 3J1
E-mail: maggie@kidsfunwithdrama.com
Telephone: (613) 834-5091
Web site:
www.kidsfunwithdrama.com

Table of Contents

Part 1	Fun with Drama	
	Family and local history comes alive!.....	5
Part 2	A Collection of Plays	
	Dear Diary... A Monologue.....	7
	Métis on the Move.....	15
	After the Battle of Batoche.....	25
Part 3	Cross Curricular learning opportunities through DRAMA in the classroom and Production Notes.....	39
	Bibliography.....	42



Family & Local History Plays Are Born!

My parents' stories about my Métis roots enlivened my childhood imagination! My father, Arthur Joseph Tourond who died when I was 9 years of age was born in Batoche, Saskatchewan. His parents were Elzéar Tourond and Ernestine Breland.

The first story I remember was that of Louis Riel carrying my two-year old father as the families fled on that last fateful day of the Battle of Batoche. I don't think my father remembered that very well but he remembered being told about it!

After my father's death, my mother used to tell me stories about my father and my great grandmother, Josephite Tourond. She lost her husband, Joseph in 1883 while living at Fish Creek before the Métis uprising. Mom told me that my great-grandmother was a very spunky lady. Just before the Battle of Fish Creek, some of the Canadian soldiers stole her horse and wagon. She was so angry, that she marched right into the army camp demanding her stolen property be restored. They were so stunned at her courage that General Middleton ordered their return. Her family was totally amazed when she drove back into the yard with the horse and wagon!

Mom also told me that the old family clock that has been in our home ever since I can remember belonged to my great-grandmother. No one is exactly sure how my father got it. However it must have been important to him! It certainly is a family heirloom and I bequeath it to my cousin Henri Paulhus and his son Marc with great pleasure!

The plays in this Volume 5 of *Fun With Drama* are dedicated to my Métis ancestors, family and friends. The tremendous support I have received from the Gabriel Dumont Institute leads me to accept their invitation to have these plays on the *Gabriel Dumont Institute Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture* (www/metismuseum.ca) and published in *New Breed Magazine*. I hope many teachers will download its many resources and use them! Please write and tell me how the students like them.

I have in fact spent years reading, asking, listening and thinking about the events and situations that were faced by my Métis ancestors. As I drove from Batoche to

St François Xavier in an air conditioned, cruise control equipped car, I thought long and hard about my great-grandmother's similar journey by Red River cart. I thought about her physical strength and courage as she continually faced set backs and even deaths in her family.

Visiting the *Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture* and finding the photographs of the final day of the Battle of Batoche, with the Métis in the rifle pits being slaughtered by the army was a moment of deep emotion for me. My grandfather was almost certainly there. His life ended that day. That is how these plays were born!

Dear Diary...



Monologue by Louis Riel's fiancée, Marie-Julie Guernon.

NARRATOR: (Echo) Marie-Julie Guernon, Marie-Julie Guernon, Marie-Julie Guernon.

(Marie-Julie enters left front stage sitting at her table writing in her diary with projection of Diary on background.)

Dear diary! January 1866

I am so happy today! I have just met a charming man who has been at the Collège de Montréal! Louis is so handsome and so gentle and kind! We talked for a long time after Mass at the church today and he said he'd like to see me again! I'm so excited!

Dear diary!

It's a week since I have had time to write to you, dear diary! So much has happened. Louis Riel is such a kind and generous young man. He was a very good student. He studied Latin, Greek, French, English, Philosophy and Science. I found out that he had very good grades at the Collège de Montréal. I want to introduce him to my parents!

I think they will like him.

(Marie-Julie crosses to right front stage sitting down in front of her dresser.)

Dear diary!

Another week has gone by and I have been so busy this week! Louis is now living with his aunt Lucie and Uncle John. He has left the Collège de Montréal. He is such a good friend. We can talk about everything together. When we talk, time seems to fly.

He makes me very happy!

MARIE-JULIE *(Looking in her mirror)* Mirror, mirror, on the wall, Who's the happiest girl in Montreal?

NARRATOR Marie-Julie Guernon, Marie-Julie Guernon, Marie-Julie Guernon

(Marie-Julie sits down at her dressing table again.)

Dear diary!

Louis and I met again today at his aunt's home. He told me about his father's death two years ago and how badly that affected his studies and his life. He has moments of depression. He left the Collège de Montréal soon after finding out about his father's death. He kept on studying and staying with the Grey Nuns but finally he quit his studies. He is now working for a lawyer, Mr. Rodolphe Laflamme. I hope he will be successful.

Dear diary!

Louis says he likes to talk with me a lot and I think he will propose soon. He is coming to meet my parents this week for the first time. I do hope they will like him!

(Marie-Julie moves to centre stage, standing gracefully.)

Dear diary!

Louis was very charming and natural with my parents and they did like him. I'm sure my father will ask him a lot of questions. I just hope things go well!

Dear diary!

Louis is not very happy these days! He is distracted and depressed. My parents don't know much about Louis. They know he is from the Red River but they don't know he is Métis. I'm not sure what they'll say about that. They are more worried about his having left the Collège with failing grades. They don't understand why he is sometimes depressed. I just hope they don't find out our secret.

(Marie-Julie moves to left front stage sitting down at the writing table again.)

Dear diary! June 12, 1866

I am so very happy today! Louis asked me to marry him. My parents want us to publish the banns in the Church of the Holy Infant Jesus in Mile End. I hope they don't start asking too many questions. They will probably find out our secret sooner or later. But I hope we'll be married before that happens!

Dear diary!

Louis and I went to the Church of the Holy Infant Jesus in Mile End today. Our banns are being published there starting next week. My father asked Louis how his mother is managing since the death of his father. Louis answered him very well saying his mother is living with a relative and is doing well. She is a woman of faith and that impressed my father a lot!

(Marie-Julie returns to her dresser right front stage.)

Dear diary!

Our banns have been read for two weeks now but my father asked Louis some more questions today and found out that he is Métis! He looked very serious and went into the kitchen to talk with my mother. Oh dear... I hope there will not be trouble. Secrets! Secrets! Secrets!

Dear diary!

I am so upset today, diary, I can't stop crying. My father talked with Louis again and told him that he and mama will not give their permission for me to marry him because he is of native blood. Louis is Métis which means he is of both French and Native ancestors. He is very smart and very charming but that does not seem to count with my father. Now everyone will find out our secret! Father has gone to the church to cancel the banns.

Dear diary!

I am too upset to write any more. I have lost the man I love, Louis Riel! He told us that he cannot live without me and that he is going down to Chicago and St Paul where he knows a poet, Louis Fréchette. He has not finished his studies, he has quit his job and now he wants to go away. But what about us? I still love Louis. I want to marry him and have his children! But my father says NO!

MARIE-JULIE *(Picking up her hand mirror.)* Mirror, mirror in my hand, who's most depressed in this land?

NARRATOR *(Echo)* Marie-Julie Guernon, Marie-Julie Guernon, Marie-Julie Guernon.

(Marie-Julie moves to centre front stage.)



Dear diary!

Everything is over with Louis! I never get any letters from him. I have no idea if he has arrived safely in Chicago! I don't even know if he still loves me. I am so depressed!

(Marie-Julie falls to the ground, covers her face as she cries to herself, then returns to her table at right front stage.)

Dear diary!

I have never had a single letter from Louis! I think he must have forgotten me! My parents want me to start seeing other men and to forget about Louis. But how can I?

I loved him and I still do!

(Marie-Julie picks up a newspaper.)

Dear diary!

There was a newspaper article about the Red River Settlement. There are troubles between the English and the Métis and the Indians. I hope Louis is all right? I guess I'll never know.

Dear diary!

I went to church again today with my parents and I met a young man named John. His full name is Jean Malboeuf du Beausoleil. That's quite a handle for a name! He was very nice to me but he's not at all like Louis. He is not charming!

Dear diary!

Jean was invited to our home for Sunday dinner this week. He is very nice and I like him but I still miss Louis Riel.

(Marie-Julie crosses to left front stage sitting at her dresser.)

Dear diary!

There was a celebration at the church this week. I went with my parents and Jean and I had time to talk quite a bit. We got along very well. He made me laugh and then he told me about his life. He asked me what I like to do as well. I do like him.

Dear diary!

Jean asked me to marry him today. My parents have given their consent. I still miss Louis but I guess I'll never hear from him again so I may as well meet other men and get married.

Dear diary!

Jean and I were married today. It was a big wedding ceremony and a lovely reception afterwards. It was great and I do love Jean. He's very good to me.

(Marie-Julie comes to centre stage with another newspaper.)

Dear diary! 1870

Jean and I are very happy together. I do wish I knew if Louis Riel is all right? I read another article in the Montreal Gazette about the Red River

Settlement. I couldn't believe it when I saw Louis' name. He has started a Provisional Government for the Métis. He sent letters to the Canadian government and finally the Manitoba Act has been passed. The article said that he has now escaped to the United States because some people want to kill him. I sure hope that Louis will be all right.

(Marie-Julie walks quietly back stage and waits quietly... she picks up her diary in the middle of the stage and runs to front centre stage.)

Dear diary! 1885

I have just found your diary after about nearly twenty years! A lot has happened since I wrote in my diary the last time in 1870!. Jean and I are a lot older and our family is growing up. I still watch the newspapers for news of Louis Riel. This week, I saw an article about Louis going to the Saskatchewan Country to help the Métis people there. He was given a big welcome and he is writing letters to the Canadian government. Fifteen years is a long time... I have neglected my diary all that time! Now it's 1885!

(Marie-Julie picks up another newspaper from the floor.)

Dear diary!

Horrors! I have just read the newspapers about the uprising in Saskatchewan. The government of Sir John A. Macdonald is sending troops out to fight against the Métis in the Saskatchewan Country! That's where Louis is! I sure hope he will be all right!

(Still centre stage.)

Dear diary!

The news of Louis Riel gets worse and worse. There have been three big battles. The Métis won the Battles of Duck Lake and Fish Creek but they have lost the Battle of Batoche. All the Métis people from Batoche are scattered. Many of the men have been put in prison. I don't know where Louis Riel is! I'm so worried about him!

Dear diary!

The newspapers are full of Louis Riel. I can't believe it! Louis has given himself up and he is in prison in Regina! They are going to try him for treason. Oh, my poor Louis, what is going to happen to you? I'm so worried and upset!

Dear diary!

Today is November 17, 1885. The worst has happened! Louis Riel was hanged in Regina yesterday. What a terrible way for him to finish his life! My father asked me today if I were thankful I had not married him! I just burst into tears and ran to the bedroom! Oh Louis, you were my first love! And you have been hanged for treason! I can't believe it!

MARIE-JULIE Mirror, mirror, on the door, Louis has gone forevermore!

NARRATOR *(Echo)* Marie-Julie Guernon, Marie-Julie Guernon,
Marie-Julie Guernon.

(Marie-Julie falls to her knees clutching the newspaper to her heart as she sobs quietly before standing up to take her well earned bow.)

<http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/fr/collection/artefacts/MP-1978.29.8§ion=196> (photo of park at Mile End).



Red River Métis on the Move!

NARRATOR

The Métis people were watching and counting! 1870, 1875, 1880, 1885! “Enough is enough!” they cried! All the injustices done to them exploded! Looking back, 1870 was an historic year when Manitoba became a province of Canada! The Canadian Government finally negotiated with Louis Riel’s Provisional Government and in the spring of 1870 passed The Manitoba Act. It was a victory in some ways guaranteeing the English and French languages, Protestant and Roman Catholic schools plus existing landowners were to be respected! High hopes! And it was the year of the Census! Just listen as the census takers come to the door of a Métis family in St François Xavier! The Tourond family has just finished breakfast when there is a loud knock at the door!

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK

JOSEPH TOUROND Come in! Come in! (*Going to the door and opening it.*)

CENSUS TAKER Good morning Mr. Tourond. We are part of the Census Team. May we come in and record the names of everyone who lives in this house?

JOSEPH Of course! Come on in! We’ve seen enough changes in this part of the country lately, one more won’t hurt!

CENSUS TAKER You're sure right there! We're now a province of Canada!

JOSEPHTE TOUROND *(Wife and Mother)* That's for sure! We have rights to our language and to our religion plus they say we have rights to our land! If that's true it will be good.

JOSEPH Yes, if that's true. We hope so but we're not sure yet!

CENSUS TAKER So Mr. Tourond, who are the people living in your house?

JOSEPH Well here is my wife Josephte Paul. She is 40 and I'm 44.

CENSUS TAKER Right. And the children

DAVID I'm the eldest, age 20. This is Calixte. He's 18.

JOSEPHTE Pierre is 16 and Patrice is 14.

CENSUS TAKER How many children in all?

JOSEPHE We've 10 children in all.

ELZÉAR I'm next and I'm 12 years-old.

FRANÇOIS Yes and I'm next. I'm 10 years-old. Charles is 8 years-old.

MARIE-THÉRÈSE Don't forget me! I'm Marie-Thérèse and I'm 6.

JOSEPHTE Élise is 3 and Hyacinthe is just one year old! He's my baby!

CENSUS TAKER That's a great family you have Madame Tourond. Congratulations!

JOSEPHE Thank you! We want our children to have a good life. The Red River has been a dangerous place. We're not sure if it will be safer now that we are a province of Canada with rights. We just hope that Louis Riel will be safe!

JOSEPH Well, if it's not safer we'll go further west! Now what about a cup of tea before you leave? You've had a lot of work to do here at St François Xavier. It's a good group of people. We're all Métis and we look after each other and we have good times together too. I'd hate to leave!

Scene 2

NARRATOR The Métis people in St François Xavier, St Boniface and St Norbert still had lots of troubles. Louis Riel and his Provisional Government were promised amnesty for leading the Red River Resistance but the promise was never really made and it certainly was not kept. Soldiers were on the way from the East so Louis Riel and many others fled to the USA! The Tourond family farmed their piece of land and watched the troubles. But David and Calixte had other ideas!

JOSEPH There's lots of work to do in the fields today boys. Eat a good breakfast because you'll need to be strong.

DAVID Dad, we work hard here but we can never trust the Canadian Government. Calixte and I want our own

land soon and all the promises of land for the Métis have not been kept so far.

JOSEPH That's true!

CALIXTE Yes dad, David and I want to go further west—to Batoche. We could get some land on the South Saskatchewan River and start a ranch. When we get settled, then you and mom and the other kids could come out!

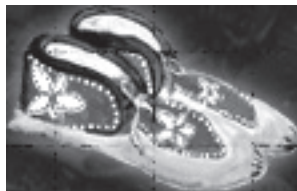
JOSEPHTE That's a long trip but it would be worth it to have peace of mind!

DAVID Anyway, we have not had a social for quite a few weeks. Let's have a dance with singing, storytelling and lots of food!

JOSEPHTE That's a good idea. Let's plan it all together tonight after supper.

DAVID Yes that's good! I'll wear my beaded buckskin jacket, my moccasins, my *mitasses* (*leggings*) and of course my Métis Sash. I want to look good!

ELZÉAR I know you're trying to impress the girls!



Scene 3

NARRATOR The Tourond family invited all the other families who lived nearby and they had a social evening! It's getting late but David wants to tell a story. Just listen!

DAVID Listen up everybody! This is a true story. The Battle of the Grand Coteau happened more than twenty years ago.

I have listened to my father and to my grandfather tell the story. Now it is my turn! In July 1851, three brigades of Métis planned to go to the Grand Coteau area for the buffalo hunt: the St Boniface and Pembina brigades left for the hunt and were planning to meet the White Horse Plains brigade further west. The three brigades needed to hunt near each other in case of an attack by the Sioux who hated the Métis for hunting "their" buffalo!

Towards the end of the hunt, the White Horse Plains brigade was hunting further away from the two other brigades when their scouts came upon a huge encampment of about 2,000 Sioux warriors quite near the Métis camp.

The scouts tried to talk to the Sioux but were taken hostage. Only two scouts escaped on speedy horses. In the Métis camp, Jean-Baptiste Falcon, the hunt leader was putting all the Red River carts into a circle getting ready to defend themselves against the Sioux. Women and children and all supplies were placed in the middle and the men dug rifle pits all around the outside of the Red River carts. Trenches were dug under the carts where the women and children could hide from danger. The Sioux came to "talk" but the Métis did not believe them.

That night, the Métis brigade tried to send scouts to get help from the two other brigades hunting not too

far away but the Sioux saw them. Later two scouts did manage to get away to call for help. The next day, July 13, a huge number of Sioux rode towards the Métis camp; the Métis men rode out to meet them with gifts but there was no chance to talk.

The Métis raced back to their rifle pits. The Sioux did not attack en masse. They rode up in small groups shooting with rifles and arrows at the men in the rifle pits. But the Métis men were all sharpshooters and they killed many of the Sioux.

During the night there was an eclipse of the moon and a sudden thunderstorm. The Sioux were afraid that the big “Manitou” a supernatural being was protecting the Métis. The Sioux withdrew, however, they kept on yelling and shouting all night meaning they had not finished their warpath attack!

The Métis tried packing up their Red River carts and tried to escape. However, during the next day, the scouts warned that the Sioux were coming again. The same story: circle the Red River carts, dig rifle pits and trenches and face the Sioux attack. Same story: the Métis sharpshooters killed many Sioux and had few casualties.

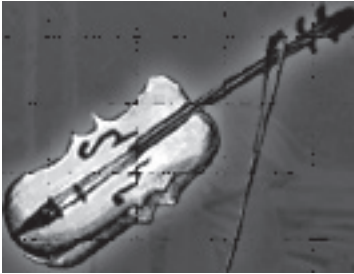
After five hours of battle the Sioux chief conceded defeat. Just as the Sioux retreated a downpour of rain again scared the Sioux thinking the Manitou was taking care of the Métis! Just then a huge group of hunters from the other brigades galloped up to support them... just minutes too late! What a great Métis victory!

(Clapping by everyone.)

JOSEPH You tell that story so well David! It's like you had been there!

I remember it well because I was there!

JOSEPHTE Let's have some music and dancing! Marie-Thérèse, why don't you start with the "Red River Jig"?



(Marie-Thérèse comes out and dances the "Red River Jig" to fiddle music.)

(Clapping by everyone.)

Scene 4

NARRATOR David and Calixte were as good as their word. They left their family in St François Xavier and went to Batoche to scout around and find good land where their parents and family could come and settle. In 1882, Joseph, Josephte and their children packed up all their household things and farm equipment on to their **Red River carts**. Josephte carefully packed her clock and took it with her. They took their horses and animals with them as well and left for Fish Creek! Listen to the Red River carts and watch them as they move slowly across the prairie! It must have taken weeks to make that long trek!

Project the photograph of the Red River Cart Train and play the squeaking sound (www.info.co.clay.mn.us/history/cart_squeak.htm) they made as they travelled!

JOSEPHTE Oh David, Calixte! It is so good to see you again. You have built a house and sheds! Good for you! We can move right in and we can finally be at home again!

DAVID Hello mother! Hello father! Welcome to the Saskatchewan! Yes you are now at home. Look at our beautiful land!

CALIXTE Yes mother, we can ranch here and do well.

JOSEPH You have done well, sons. Thank you for getting ready for us. I am very tired now. I must get some sleep.

JOSEPHTE I don't like the look of your father. He does not look well.

DAVID I hope he'll be better in the morning, mother.

CALIXTE I'll go and see if he's alright! (*Going into the house.*)

JOSEPHTE I don't think our father is very well, David. I don't know what his trouble is. Yes Calixte, is your father all right?

CALIXTE Mother, I think you had better come inside right away. I don't think father is well at all. We should ride to Batoche for the doctor.

DAVID Mom, I'm sorry. I'm afraid it is too late. Our father is dead.

JOSEPHTE Oh, Joseph, my Joseph! We have just made it to Fish Creek and I have to lose you. Oh Joseph, my Joseph!

Scene 5

NARRATOR The death of Joseph Tourond was a terrible blow to the whole family. They had no choice but to carry on and make a success of ranching. And carry on they did and

successful they were! They had plenty of land to grow hay to feed their animals. But the Métis troubles they thought they had left behind in the Red River Settlement seemed to follow them to the Saskatchewan! Surveyors were said to be coming! Would they be able to keep their land that they had worked so hard for? Meetings, questions, worries! What would happen to the Métis next?

One day the news came that four Métis men had gone down to the United States to ask Louis Riel to come back to the Saskatchewan to help negotiate with Ottawa. The news flew from place to place that yes Louis Riel was coming. And he would be stopping at Fish Creek on his way to Batoche!

JOSEPHTE Élise, you're a big girl now nearly 18 years-old. Louis Riel is going to stop at our house on his way to Batoche. I want you to present this Métis sache to him when he comes... We'll make him welcome.

ÉLISE Mom, I'll be too shy!

JOSEPHTE No you won't! You'll make us all proud of you!

ÉLISE I'll sure try mother.

(Noise outside at the arrival of Louis Riel who comes into the room with a crowd of Métis men surrounding him.)

LOUIS RIEL Good afternoon Madame Josephte Tourond. I'm so glad to see you again. It's been fifteen years since we met in the Red River. You have a wonderful site for your ranch here. You've worked hard at putting up your buildings. I am so sorry to hear about the death of your husband Joseph. He was a good man and a supporter of the Métis cause.

JOSEPHTE Thank you Louis. I'm glad to see you again too. Yes I miss Joseph very much but I have wonderful children. My sons and daughters work hard and support me.

LOUIS RIEL Madame Josephte Tourond, you have a great family and I need all of your support in this struggle for justice for the Saskatchewan. Will you lend me your support and that of your seven sons?

JOSEPHTE Yes Louis Riel, I certainly will. My family and I are right behind you in this struggle for Métis land rights. We pray for success every day! And you may come here to organize the uprising anytime!

LOUIS RIEL God bless you Madame Josephte Tourond! Thank you for your prayers! And thank you for the invitation. We need all the support we can get.

(Elise comes forward and presents the Métis sash to Louis Riel.)

LOUIS RIEL Thank you! Thank you! May God help us all!

(The Métis men cheer and start singing the chorus of the Métis Anthem as the sound of rifle fire is heard outside.)

Métis National Anthem

*We are proud to be Métis,
Watch a nation rise again,
Never more forgotten people,
We're the true Canadian.*

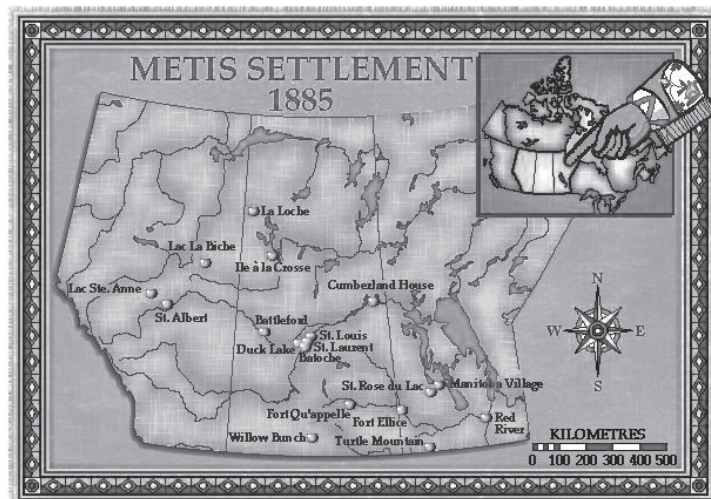
NARRATOR The Tourond family had walked straight from the frying pan into the fire. Here they were in the middle of a war which came right to their farm! But they were a strong and passionate people... Just listen to them singing the Métis Anthem.

After the Battle of Batoche

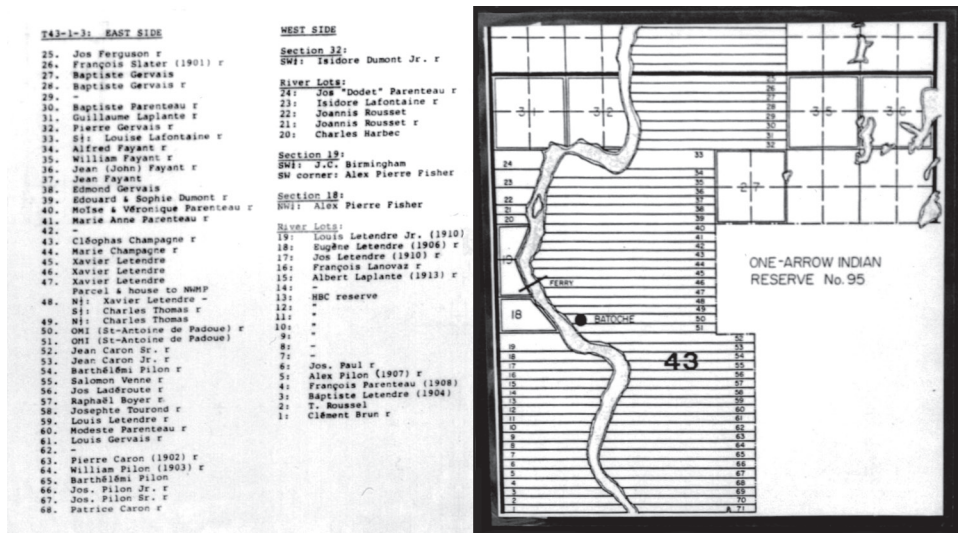
Scene 1

NARRATOR Joseph and Joseph Tourond were Red River Métis living in what is now Manitoba. They decided to move to The Saskatchewan Country in 1882. Why? Because the Canadian government surveyed the land into one-mile squares called sections. They did not respect the land claims of the Métis already living along the Red River. The Tourond family moved along with their nine children to Fish Creek near Batoche on the South Saskatchewan River.

The Métis had already sent messages and petitions to the government asking for title to their farms along the South Saskatchewan River without forcing them onto the square section system. However, Prime Minister, Sir John. A. Macdonald instead of answering them, sent the Army, the “Red Coats” as the Métis called them led by General Middleton. So the Métis decided to stand up for their rights.

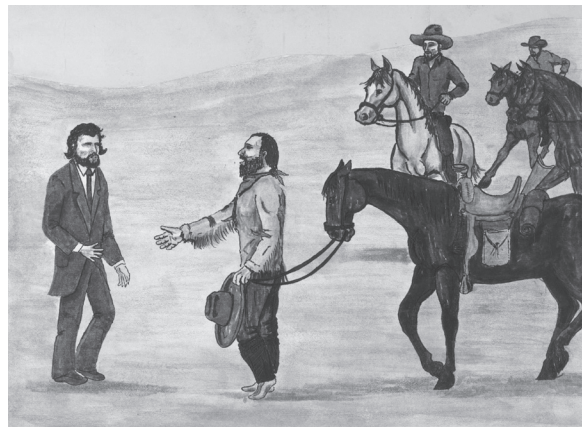


Gabriel Dumont Institute:
Map, gdi_m010
(www.metismuseum.ca)



Layout of the Métis farms

Gabriel Dumont was the leader of the Métis community, a man of action and organization. He and the Métis people knew that Louis Riel had negotiated with the government about the same problem in Manitoba in 1870. He was living in exile in the United States for the execution of the Orangist Thomas Scott. So the Métis brought Louis Riel to The Saskatchewan Country to help them. This scene opens with the Red Coats camped not far from the Tourond farm in Fish Creek where Madame Tourond is talking with her sons.



Gabriel Dumont Institute:
Gabriel and Louis Riel
BD1.1L. 0115
(www.metismuseum.ca)

CALIXTE Come on Pierre! Let's do the chores! You water the animals and I'll get the hay.

PIERRE Yes, it's a good thing we have enough water right now.

M^{ME} TOUROND That's true but we must not waste water or we could be short again!

PIERRE Yes sure! (*going outdoors*)

PIERRE (*Rushing back into the house*) The wagon is gone and the horses are gone!

M^{ME} TOUROND Gone! What do you mean "gone"?

(*Knock at the door.*)

JACQUES Hey Calixte, I saw the red coats drive off with your horses and wagon just a few minutes ago. I came running down to tell you as fast as I could!

CALIXTE Do you mean they stole them!

M^{ME} TOUROND Of all the nerve! Stealing from poor Métis farmers!

JACQUES I can't understand why! The horses, yes, but why the wagon!

M^{ME} TOUROND Well that's just not right. I'm going to get them back! Hitch up the buggy, Calixte!

CALIXTE Sorry mom, the wagon's gone!

M^{ME} TOUROND Well I'm going to walk to the Red Coats' camp!

Scene 2

NARRATOR The Red Coats had just put the horses and wagon away when Madame Tourond marched into the camp. She insisted on seeing General Middleton who gave her back the horses and wagon!* When she got home, her sons were astonished to see her driving the horses into the yard!

ELZÉAR Hey, mom, how did you get those horses and the wagon back? I thought the Red Coats had taken them?

M^{ME} TOUROND Yes, they had! But they had no right and I told General Middleton. He ordered the soldiers to give them back to me... so here I am.

CALIXTE Wow, mama, you've got spunk! You sure are lucky!

M^{ME} TOUROND Yes, I am very lucky they listened to me! I needed some luck for a change!

(Going over to the window and looking outside, putting her hands up to the window sill, she leaned forward and lowered her head as she lamented the death of her husband Joseph).

Oh! Joseph, Joseph! My dear husband, since your death, I miss you so much. Thank God you gave me such wonderful children to help me. Oh Joseph! the Red Coats are here and I don't know what they will do to us poor? Oh Joseph! What will happen to us?

ELZÉAR I know you miss father a lot. Are you afraid of the future mama?

* This story is in oral Métis tradition.

M^{ME} TOUROND YES I miss Joseph. Am I afraid? NO I am not but the Canadian government is wrong not to answer our letters about the land surveys. They don't take the Métis seriously. How do we get their attention? Why don't they send someone to talk to us, not to shoot at us!?

Scene 3

NARRATOR The battle of Duck Lake was followed by the Battle of Fish Creek. The Métis scouts were on the lookout for any movement by the Canadian soldiers.

M^{me} Tourond made a big pot of stew in case the Métis fighters needed food during the day.

FRANÇOIS *(Looking out the window)* I can see the ridge and bluff of trees where Gabriel Dumont and his men are hiding to ambush the Red Coats.

(Knocking at the door.)

M^{ME} TOUROND Come in! Come in!

GABRIEL DUMONT *(Coming in with Philippe and Daniel)* Hello Madame Tourond.

We're scouting ahead to know when the Red Coats start moving this way.

M^{ME} TOUROND Oh, hello Gabriel! Hello Philippe and Daniel. It's good to see you. You must be hungry. Have some of this good stew.

GABRIEL DUMONT Thanks very much Madame. We'd love some stew.
(As they eat).

PHILIPPE This is sure good stew. Thanks Madame Tourond.

DANIEL Yes, thank you very much.

M^{ME} TOUROND Gabriel, I hope you will give the Red Coats a “proper welcome” when they come past our place.

GABRIEL DUMONT Oh yes, that’s for sure. Louis went back to Batoche with some men in case there is an attack from Prince Albert there. Now our men can move more quickly because Louis Riel is always stopping to say the rosary and telling us not to shoot first. Anyway we are waiting for the Red Coats behind the bluff on the ridge beside the trail. They will get a “proper welcome” alright!

(Knocking at the door.)

M^{ME} TOUROND Come in.

MICHEL *(Bursting into the room)* Gabriel, you’d better come right away. The Red Coats have started moving this way.



The Saskatchewan Archives: Battlefield of Fish Creek, R-B2826

(Gabriel and his men rush out. The sounds of gunfire in the distance are heard throughout the rest of this scene.)

FRANÇOIS I hope Elzéar and Calixte are all right?

M^{ME} TOUROND I want you to take water to all the men so they are not thirsty during the battle. You can slip out the back door and through the bushes till you get to the ridge.

PIERRE *(Rushing into the room)* I've come to get more ammunition. I think we're beating the Red Coats. We're very well hidden and we can see them clearly.

M^{ME} TOUROND What a shame it's come to this. But we don't have any more choice. We have to fight now!

ELZÉAR *(Rushing into the house)* It's too dangerous for you here, mom. You'd better get to Batoche as fast as possible. If you take the horse and buggy, you can get away by the back road. There's no fighting between Fish Creek and Batoche yet.

But you'd better go right away.

M^{ME} TOUROND Right, let's go. We must take the...

ELZÉAR Leave everything, mom and go. This is getting much too dangerous.

Scene 4

NARRATOR The morning of Tuesday, May 12, Father Moulin was in the church in the village of Batoche. He knew that the Red Coats would certainly attack again that day. The Battle of Batoche had been raging for two days

and Father Moulin was very worried. The sound of gunfire could be heard in the distance.

CHARLES The Red Coats are fighting harder today than they did yesterday. It's terrible that the Métis are running out of ammunition... the Red Coats don't know that... yet!

FATHER MOULIN This is a terrible... Ouch!

CHARLES You've been hit Father!

FATHER MOULIN Yes! It's a stray bullet!

CHARLES Your leg is bleeding. Here I'll help you bandage it up.

FATHER MOULIN Thank you Charles!

GABRIEL DUMONT (*Rushing into the church*) Charles, do you have any ammunition on you?

CHARLES No, I don't know where there is any ammunition.

GABRIEL DUMONT We have nearly run out of ammunition. I have been taking some off the Red Coats' bodies but there's not enough. I must hurry over to see Michel's group and see if they have any ammunition left. (*Gabriel rushes out of the church*).

CHARLES It's nearly 2:00 Father. You must need to eat something. You look pale.

FATHER MOULIN Yes, Charles, please bring me something to eat. The sound of the gunfire has gone quiet all of a sudden. I wonder what's happening?



The Saskatchewan Archives: 1st Shot Battle of Batoche, R-A7518

CHARLES *(Looking out the window carefully).* Oh the Red Coats are rushing the Métis rifle pits... and listen to the gunfire now. It's huge! They're shooting everyone in the rifle pits, even the old men. Look they have just shot Elzéar and Calixte.

FATHER MOULIN This is a terrible day. What will happen now?

Scene 5

NARRATOR As the rest of the Métis could see they were losing the battle of Batoche, they grabbed their wives and families and fled to the woods to hide. The soldiers rushed the rifle pits and shot the Métis who had run out of ammunition including the elderly and disabled men. Then they ransacked their homes... The Métis who survived hid in the woods only coming back to the village very carefully over the next few days...

M^{ME} TOUROND

Oh Elzéar, Oh Calixte, my two sons dead, sacrificed at this terrible battle at Batoche! Dead for the cause of freedom for us Métis... freedom to own our own land. This bloody battle today has robbed me of you both! This is a terrible day for us Métis! Oh Joseph what will happen to us?

PATRICE

Mother, this is a terrible day for us! Are you afraid?

M^{ME} TOUROND

Oh Patrice, my heart is sick with pain to lose Elzéar and Calixte... but afraid? NO, I am proud of their fight for the Métis cause. They died to save our land and our way of life. They are heroes in my eyes!

Scene 6

NARRATOR

Louis Riel was a well educated and non-violent spokesman for the Métis. After the Battle of Batoche, he gave himself up to General Middleton hoping to avoid terrible consequences for the Métis people. In spite of his good intentions, he stood accused of high treason. His trial took place in Regina July 28 to 31 and August 1, 1885. Judge Richardson presided over the court. The Crown lawyers were on one side of the judge, the defense lawyers were on the other side. Louis Riel sat in the middle of the courtroom facing the judge and the lawyers. The spectators were on each side and at the back of the room.

Michel had left Batoche to attend the trial but had been delayed. He arrived just in time to hear Louis Riel finish his Final Statement to the court.

LOUIS

I worked to better the condition of the people of The Saskatchewan Country at the risk of my own life, to better the condition of the people of the North

West... It will be for you to pronounce... I have pleaded "NOT GUILTY" to high treason... It will be up to you, the jury to pronounce... I thank you, your Honour for the favour you have granted me in speaking...

LAWYER FOR THE CROWN

...we the Crown have shown evidence that this rebellion was planned, premeditated and carried out deliberately. We have shown Louis Riel to be in his right mind and to have committed crimes of high treason.

JUDGE RICHARDSON I charge the jury to consider not only the accused, Louis Riel but also the impact of his actions on the people who live in this country.

Let the jury now retire to deliberate in order to reach a verdict.

MICHEL *(To Antoine standing beside him)* Did Louis Riel's lawyers argue his case well?

ANTOINE Louis Riel's own lawyers tried to prove that he is insane. They brought doctors to testify. But Louis Riel refused their claims!

MICHEL Insane!? Did they prove it?

ANTOINE I don't know what the jury will think. We'll have to wait for the verdict.

Scene 7

NARRATOR Back in Batoche, Madame Tourond is standing in front of the little church with her son Patrice. Today, November 16, 1885 is the day Louis Riel is to be hanged in Regina.

M^{ME} TOUROND Oh Louis, Louis! Our dear leader. You have been tried and condemned guilty of treason! Treason for our freedom! Today you are to be hanged! Hanged for helping us! How I feel for your poor wife, Marguerite! My husband Joseph died, next my two sons, Elzéar and Calixte both died in the fighting!

And now you are being hung today! What will happen to us now?

PATRICE This is a terrible day for us Métis, mama! I can't believe they would really hang Mr. Riel. I just can't believe it!

M^{ME} TOUROND Yes (*slowly*), this is a terrible day for us all... I just wonder what would have happened if Gabriel Dumont had not gone down to the United States to get Louis Riel. Gabriel would have fought the "Red Coats'" on the Prairies before they ever got near Batoche. Maybe....Oh it is all so complicated...It is hard to imagine what would have happened and so useless! The government ignored our petitions and then rushed out to shoot at us when we stood up for our rights. Louis Riel loved his people and he was sure there would be a miracle to save us at the last... but there was no miracle.

PATRICE It is terrible! This is a tragic day, mum. Are you afraid?

M^{ME} TOUROND

Afraid? No, we will start again ... Afraid? NO. We will survive. But I don't know how some of the other Métis will manage with so many men killed, in prison or in exile? This is a terrible time for the Métis!

M^{ME} TOUROND

Oh Joseph, Oh Elzéar, Oh Calixte, Oh Louis! What will happen to us now?

NARRATOR

The Battle of Batoche spelled great hardship and despair for the Métis people. Many Métis men went to prison. Women and children lived in misery. Madame Tourond was one spunky lady! She made claims to the War Claims Commission of her losses of \$4000. She bought and successfully managed a ranch for a number of years. When she sold the ranch, she bought a dry goods store in Batoche. If you visit Batoche, you'll find the cemetery where the people killed in the Resistance are buried. You'll also see the Batoche church and the Museum where the original post office is located. The mail slots are marked with names of the villagers and Madame Tourond's name is there. She was known as "Veuve Tourond"*. You can check her mailbox for yourself!

Optional ending: Maybe you would like to write your reactions to the Métis Resistance and post them on our mural of Batoche?



* "Veuve" Tourond means "Widow Tourond"



The church at Batoche



Gravestone of the Métis rebels



The Batoche cemetery

Cross Curricular learning opportunities through DRAMA in the classroom and Production Notes

Getting the most of doing a play with your students is like juicing an orange: good to the very last drop!

This section contains production notes to make doing a readers' theatre or a production easier and faster for the teacher and more meaningful and learningful for the students!

The background for many of the plays can be produced on Power Point projection. Students view drawings and photographs on the various web sites and draw or paint their version which can then be photographed and projected for the backdrop.

The production notes are practical information and tips for each play. The integration opportunities help teachers to link the play to several subject areas both in learning experience and evaluation: drama, speech, knowledge, insights, social skills and values.

Dear Diary...

The cast — A narrator and Marie-Julie.

The set and props — an old fashioned writing table and chair, with pen and ink, mirror on the wall, an old fashioned dresser and chair with hand mirror, a large Diary, newspapers.

Projection — Power Point projection on the backdrop of a drawing of a Diary...

History — Review the history of Western Canada, the autobiography of Louis Riel and the history of the Métis uprising in Manitoba and The Saskatchewan. Explore: www.louisrielinstitute.com/; www.gdins.org/home.html; www.metismuseum.ca/.

Suggested project topics — Communication media comparison between 1850-1900 and 1950-2000. Debate: Be it resolved that "High speed communication produces a better society".

Interview seniors and retirees about their lives and their diaries. Keep a class diary for a month.

Red River Métis on the Move!

The cast — Narrator, Joseph Tourond, Joseph (pronounced “Josette”) Tourond, Census Taker, David Tourond, Elzéar Tourond, François Tourond, Marie-Thérèse Tourond, Calixte Tourond, Elise Tourond, Louis Riel.

The set and props — Scenes 1 & 2: Kitchen table, 7 chairs Scene 3: kitchen table with lots of food, chairs around the room, fiddles, CD of jigging music. Scene 4: Red River Cart built in cardboard, old clock, a Métis sash, kitchen table, chairs.

Power Point Projection on back stage — Scenes 1 & 2: Cabin: Visitors leaving; Scene 3: www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/02183 Scene 4: www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/02118; Scene 5: www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/02188.

History — Explore the history of the Métis nation: Review the history of Western Canada, the autobiography of Louis Riel and the history of the Métis uprising in Manitoba and The Saskatchewan. Explore: www.louisrielinstitute.com; www.gdins.org/home.html; www.metismuseum.ca

Music — *Red River Jig*: CD can be purchased or downloaded from a number of web sites such as www.worldwidesunshine.com. *Métis Anthem Chorus*: Purchase the CD from The Métis Nation of Alberta, 100 Delia Gray Building, 11738 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5, Phone (780) 455-2200, Fax (780) 452-8946, Toll Free 1-800-252-7553. *Métis Anthem Chorus*: Consult the Gabriel Dumont Institute web site: <http://www.gdins.org/>. Find the lyrics and audio for Métis Anthem.

Métis National Anthem

*We are proud to be Métis,
Watch a nation rise again,
Never more forgotten people,
We're the true Canadian.*

Suggested project topics — Compare transportation in Canada in 1885 to 1985 to 2010. Compare farm equipment from the 19th century to the 21st century.

After the Battle of Batoche

The cast — Narrator, Joseph Tourond, Joseph Tourond, Pierre Tourond, Calixte Tourond, Jacques Tourond, Elzéar Tourond, Gabriel Dumont, Philippe, Daniel, Michel,

Charles, Le Père Moulin, Patrice Tourond, Louis Riel, Lawyer for the Crown, Judge Richardson, Antoine.

The set and props — kitchen table and 8 chairs.

Power Point Projections — Scene 1: www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/01929;
Scene 2 & 3: www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/03952; Scene 4 & 5: www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/04987; Scene 6: www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/03945; Scene 7: www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/07105

Bibliography

A number of reference books have proven invaluable in researching the history of the Métis in Canada:

1. Gabriel Dumont: War Leader of the Métis, Chodan, Asfar; Folklore Publishing 2003.
2. The Métis Canada's Forgotten People, Sealey, Lussier, Pemmican Publications Inc. 1975
3. Prairie Fire, The 1885 North-West Rebellion, Beal, Macleod, McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1984.
4. Gabriel Dumont, Memoirs, Editor Denis Combet, Les Editions du blé, 2006.
5. The Metis, Memorable Events and Memorable Personalities, Goulet, Fabjob Inc. 2006.
6. The Canadian Michif Language Dictionary, Norman Fleury, The Manitoba Métis Federation Michif Language Program, 2000.