MÉTIS SCRIP IN ALBERTA

RUPERTSLAND CENTRE FOR MÉTIS RESEARCH IN COLLABORATION WITH THE MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA
The research for this booklet was carried out by the Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research (RCMR), housed within the Faculty of Native Studies, University of Alberta, under the supervision of Dr. Nathalie Kermoal, Associate Dean Academic, Director of RCMR and relies upon the previous research completed by Dr. Frank Tough and the Métis Archival Project (MAP) Laboratory. Tough advised, edited and assisted with the compilation of this booklet. The documents for this project have been provided through the MAP Laboratory, under the supervision of Tough, who digitized and catalogued many of the Métis scrip records housed at Library and Archives Canada.

This booklet has been prepared for the Métis Nation of Alberta Annual General Assembly (August 10-12, 2018) by Nathalie Kermoal, Frank Tough, Jenn Rossiter and Leah Hrycun, with an overview of the New Framework Agreement by Jason Madden and Zachary Davis. Thank you to Lorne Gladue, Frank Tough and Zachary Davis for their feedback on this document.

The views and ideas expressed herein are solely those of the creators and do not necessarily represent the views of the Métis Nation of Alberta, RCMR, the Faculty of Native Studies, MAP Laboratory, the University of Alberta, or Pape Salter Teillet LLP.

Interior of Scrip commission tent at Lesser Slave Lake, Alberta. 1899.
Source: Glenbow Archives (NA-949-22).

Front Cover: Métis meeting with Scrip Commission at Fort Dunvegan, Alberta. 1899.
Source: Glenbow Archives (NA-949-28).
This booklet provides an overview of “Half-breed Scrip” in what is now Alberta and will provide a brief history of Half-breed Scrip, its meaning and its origins. The underlying reason why the federal government issued Half-breed Scrip was explained by Prime Minister (1896–1911) Wilfrid Laurier:

We determined at the outset, when we acquired the territory of the Hudson Bay Company [sic], that we would treat the halfbreeds as we would the Indians – that is, as first occupants of the soil. It has been the policy of the British Government from time immemorial not to take possession of any lands without having in some way settled with the first occupants and giving them compensation...

To do this, the federal government made Treaties with First Nations and granted scrip to the Métis.

The federal government sent several Scrip Commissions to what is now Alberta between 1885 and 1908. Relatively little is known about this history of scrip. By focusing on the community of Lac La Biche, this booklet provides an overview of land scrip in what is currently Alberta.

1 Canada, House of Commons Debates, 8th Parliament, 4th Session, Vol. 2 (3 July 1899) at column 6418.
2 Legal counsel, Zachary Davis, suggested Lac La Biche as an example for the pamphlet due to the MNA’s 90th Annual General Assembly of August 2018 being held in this location.
3 Land scrip is focused on over money scrip because the process of assigning land scrip coupons to third parties is better documented in the archival sources.
WHY WAS SCRIP NECESSARY? Westward expansion was one of Canada’s primary goals following Confederation in 1867. Rumours that Canada would annex Rupert’s Land unsettled the Métis, as they feared their rights to the land would not be respected. In 1869, the federal government sent surveyors to the Red River Settlement to survey the land. There, they met an armed Métis resistance. Under the leadership of Louis Riel, the Métis formed a provisional government and negotiated for their rights. As a result, when Canada was acquiring Rupert’s Land in 1870, it made promises to the Métis people living in Red River. 1.4 million acres of land was to be set aside for the “Half-breed” children born prior to July 15, 1870 in the original province of Manitoba. Each child was to receive the equivalent of 240 acres of land and later it was decided that heads of household (i.e. parents) were to receive the equivalent of $160 in scrip. Canada, however, failed to implement this policy diligently and few Métis actually benefitted from it. The purpose of this promise—to give the Métis children a head start over the expected influx of settlers from the east—was never realized.

The 1870 Order, the constitutional document that transferred Rupert’s Land to Canada, committed the federal government to addressing the land claims of “Indians”. The federal government intended to open land for agricultural settlement. Special land grants for railways, schools, and the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) were also approved. However, before the settlement of Rupert’s Land could go ahead, the federal government would have to deal with the land claims of the Indigenous peoples, including the Métis.

4 The name Rupert’s Land (as opposed to Rupert’s Land) will be used throughout this booklet, except where specifically required when referring to legislation or a direct quote.
On March 30, 1885, the federal government made steps to issue scrip to the Métis in the North-West Territories. However, as in Manitoba, those born after July 15, 1870 (the date the Rupertsland transfer was effective) were not eligible to receive scrip. The Applications for scrip in Alberta began in southern (Calgary and Fort McLeod and surrounding areas) and central Alberta (Edmonton and surrounding areas) in 1885 and 1886. At this time, none of the Métis in areas north of the Treaty 6 boundary were eligible for scrip because the federal government had not yet made steps to open that land for development.

The Métis in Alberta petitioned the federal government to remove the requirement that an individual had to be born before July 15, 1870 in order to receive scrip. In 1899, Treaty 8 was signed with First Nations bands and between 1899 and 1908, scrip commissions and other officials visited communities in Northern Alberta to take applications for Métis scrip. For Treaty 8, those born before the Treaty was signed at Lesser Slave Lake were eligible to apply for scrip. Moreover, those that had been denied scrip because of the July 15, 1870 birthdate cut-off could apply for scrip under the new cut-off date of December 31, 1885. Because of this change in eligibility, several scrip commissions visited communities in Central and Southern Alberta (FIGURE 3).
WHAT IS SCRIP? The word scrip refers to “any various documents used as evidence that the holder or bearer is entitled to receive something [such as ... an allotment of land].” Métis Scrip, or “Half-breed” scrip, as it is officially known, was given to the Métis people (male or female) by the Government of Canada to address Métis claims to land. Métis scrip was issued either as money scrip ($160 or $240) or land scrip (equivalent to a 160 acre quarter-section of land or a 160 acre quarter-section plus ½ of a quarter section for a total of 240 acres), both of which were to be used to acquire lands surveyed for homesteads.

FIGURE 4 Land Scrip Coupon A7010 issued to Elizabeth McKay, born at Kinosota on June 7, 1874, daughter of Angus McLeod and Mary Ducharme, for 160 Acres. Source: LAC RG15, Vol. 1408.

FIGURE 5 Money Scrip Coupon A5489 issued to Magliore Meraste, minor child of Philip Meraste, for $80.00, granted June 10, 1908. Source: LAC RG15, Vol. 1398.

Though similar, money scrip and land scrip had important differences. Money scrip was issued in dollars and could be used toward the acquisition of homestead lands. Land scrip was issued in acres and could be directly exchanged for homestead lands (i.e. 1 acre of land scrip = 1 acre of homestead land).

The *Dominion Lands Act* (1872) provided the federal government with the power to allocate a variety of land and resource tenures in Western Canada. Many categories of land grants were created including homesteads acquired by scrip. To obtain a homestead, any head of household (male or female) or any male over the age of 18 years could pay a $10 administrative fee for entry to a 160-acre parcel of land.
The conditions homesteaders had to abide by did not apply to those individuals who acquired dominion lands by land scrip or money scrip. By using scrip, homestead land could be acquired without meeting standard normal homestead requirements.

To use a land scrip coupon, the grantee (the individual named on the coupon) needed to appear in person at the Dominion Lands Office responsible for administering the nearby homestead lands that he or she wanted to acquire with their coupons. Dominion Lands Offices were located in cities and towns across the prairies and each was responsible for administering homestead lands in a region. For example, if an individual wanted to purchase homestead lands near Lethbridge, they would need to appear in person at the Lethbridge Dominion Lands Office to exchange their land scrip coupons for an application for letters patent to homestead lands. To use money scrip, anyone who came to a Dominion Lands Office with a money scrip coupon could use it to purchase lands in that area. However, some homestead lands were valued at more than $1 per acre. There was no requirement to have the Métis scrip grantee appear in person to make use of money scrip. Consequently, anyone in possession of the money scrip coupons (i.e. speculators, homesteaders) could select and purchase Dominion Lands.
Scrip and homestead are sometimes confused because all of the lands available for acquisition were administered through the *Dominion Lands Act* and by the Dominion Lands Agencies. Homesteaders and scrip coupon holders had to travel to the same offices to acquire lands and had to choose their land from the same available quarter sections. Both homesteaders and scrip holders had the same goal of obtaining letters patent that would establish a right to obtain title to their lands.

In addition to scrip, Métis could also obtain land through the homestead system. Some Métis individuals applied for homestead as soon as lands were open for settlement and later applied for scrip when it was available to them. Other Métis individuals transferred their scrip coupons to a third party (for example, a real estate investor) and later applied for homestead. Both scrip and homestead involved large amounts of paperwork.

MÉTIS PETITIONS: Whether through homestead, scrip or some other way, the Métis in present day Alberta wanted to protect their rights to their land. The transfer of Rupert’s Land to the Dominion of Canada meant the land was under the federal legislation framework provided in the Dominion Lands Act and as a result, the Métis had to work within the framework of that Act to protect their rights. Under the Dominion Lands Act only land officially surveyed by the Dominion Lands surveyors was opened for homestead. Surveyors made attempts to ensure land that was previously occupied was in the name of the rightful occupant, but those living on unsurveyed land were technically viewed as squatters and their rights to the land they occupied were not certain.

In Alberta, the Métis petitioned the government for land rights many times. In 1877, the Métis at Blackfoot Crossing petitioned the government for farm implements, seeds and assistance to settle the land. In 1878, the Métis at Cypress Hills petitioned the government for land in the form of a reserve. In 1880, the Métis at Edmonton and St. Albert petitioned the government to survey their lands. Only once the land was surveyed and divided into quarter sections could individuals begin the process of obtaining land, either through the application of scrip coupons or through the homestead system.

**LAND SCRIP PROCESS: A GENERAL MODEL**

**APPLYING FOR SCRIP – A LONG PROCESS:** The process of applying for and receiving scrip, whether land scrip or money scrip, involved a series of documents. The process of applying for and receiving land scrip progressed in phases and each phase had multiple steps that required its own specific documents to be completed. Parents or guardians of minor children had to apply for scrip on behalf of their children. To turn a claim into a grant of land, a minimum of nine forms were required, and included the Application, a Witness Declaration, Certificate, Issue Order, Scrip Coupons, Receipt, Application for Location or Application to Purchase, and Letters Patent. Most of these documents are currently located at the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa and some of them have been digitized on the Library and Archives Canada Website. Homestead records are housed at the Provincial Archives for the Province in which the homestead was located (e.g. Alberta). See **FIGURE 10** for a flowchart to illustrate how government officials viewed the processes.

**LAND SCRIP - THE GENERAL MODEL, ca. 1906**

**PHASE 1: ESTABLISHMENT (OTTAWA)**
- **Dominion Lands Act**
- **Dept. of the Interior**
- **Draft Order in Council**
- **Privy Council**
- **Order in Council**
- **Scrip Commissioner**

**PHASE 2: APPLICATION (IN COUNTRY)**
- **Metis Claimant**
- **Scrip Application**
- **Witness Declaration**
- **Scrip Commissioner**
- **Scrip Certificate**
- **Metis Provisional Grantee**

**PHASE 3: PAPER ENTITLEMENT (OTTAWA/IN COUNTRY)**
- **Scrip Certificate**
- **Dept. of the Interior**
- **Scrip Issue Order**
- **Scrip Coupons (240 acres)**
- **Metis Grantee**
- **Scrip Receipt**

**PHASE 4: LOCATION (DOMINION LANDS OFFICE)**
- **Scrip Coupons (240 acres)**
- **Dominion Land Agent**
- **Metis Grantee**
- **Application to Purchase Dominion Lands**

**PHASE 5: PATENT**
- **Scrip Coupons (240 acres)**
- **Application to Purchase Dominion Lands**
- **Dept. of the Interior**
- **Land Patent**

**FIGURE 10** Land Scrip – The General Model, ca. 1906
In order to address Métis claims in a given area, a scrip commissioner was appointed by an Order in Council. Working within the authority of the *Dominion Lands Act*, the specifics for who qualified for scrip would be set out by an Order in Council. Some of the scrip commissioners that took application for scrip in present day Alberta were Roger Goulet, Narcisse O. Coté, James A.J. McKenna, James Walker, Joseph A. Coté, Samuel McLeod, James A. Macrae and R.C. MacDonald. The federal government then provided notice to the places it intended to visit as well as the dates the commissioner would be taking applications for scrip.

Once at the locale, the commission would set up at HBC posts or church missions to provide an opportunity to apply. To apply, an individual had to appear before the commissioner and if the commissioner thought the individual would qualify for scrip, an Application would be made in the presence of the commissioner. The Application contained the names of the applicant’s parents as well as any children they had. A family member or other person who knew the individual who was applying for scrip would complete a witness declaration.
Once the Application was completed, the commissioner and his staff checked the name of the individual against their ledgers (along with other information such as place and date of birth) to make sure no previous claim for scrip had been made and granted. If the applicant qualified, a scrip certificate, issued and signed by the commissioner (see Figure 12), was given to the individual grantee and one or two copies were kept by the Department of the Interior. Both land and money scrip were administered in this way.

This certificate did not immediately entitle the individual to land; it only confirmed that the individual was entitled to scrip. The certificate needed to be sent to the Department of the Interior to be exchanged for land scrip coupons, issued in the name of the individual. Once the scrip coupons were issued, the Department of the Interior would send the scrip coupons to the individual or a third party and whoever received the coupons would sign a receipt (see Figure 13). Most often the certificates were not in the possession of the grantees and scrip coupons were seldom delivered to grantees.  

Scrip coupons could then be used at the Dominion Lands Office to select and acquire land.

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According to the rules of land scrip, the individual named on the scrip coupon had to appear in person in order to locate their scrip. This requirement was known as the Rule of Location. Additionally, the scrip coupon could not be sold or transferred to anyone else until the Métis grantee named on the land scrip coupon had located their scrip at the Dominion Lands Office. The Métis grantee also had to be an adult to sell or transfer the land once it had been located.

To comply with the Rule of Location, the Métis grantee had to travel to the Dominion Lands Office that administered the land they wanted to acquired. This process was called “locating” scrip and the grantee would have to complete an Application for Location identifying the lands to which he or she wanted to apply their 160 acres scrip coupon and/or their 80 acres scrip coupon. Locating was done by pointing to an available section on the map. Only lands open for homesteading could be chosen.

**FIGURE 14** Edmonton Sheet.
Source: LAC RG15, Sectional Maps, plate 79.
Once the grantee had located their scrip coupons at the Dominion Land Office as part of the legal land selection process, and the Application for Location had been completed, the application was sent to the Land Patents Branch in Ottawa. There, the application would be checked against other applications and if no issues or complications were noted, letters patent were sent to the patentee, confirming their right to obtain title to their lands.

ELÉONORE HAMELIN’S SCRIP EXPERIENCE: On March 2, 1900, the Privy Council passed an Order-in-Council that established a Scrip Commission to hear the claims of the Métis who resided in Alberta/Assiniboia for those who had been born between July 15, 1870 and December 31, 1885. The commissioners at this time were James A.J. McKenna and James Walker and they took applications and, in most cases, issued scrip certificates.

Eléonore Hamelin appeared before scrip commissioners, James A.J. McKenna and James Walker, at Lac La Biche on September 21, 1900. The application was completed by one of the commissioners and Eléonore would have provided her answers to the questions asked in the application verbally. Eléonore stated that she was born on June 20, 1879 at Lac La Biche and that both of her parents were Half-breeds. A certificate of baptism also formed part of Eléonore’s application. It was often church officials who provided proof of an applicant’s identity, for example, through a birth certificate.

FIGURE 16 Scrip Commission meeting at Hudson’s Bay Company post, Lesser Slave Lake, Alberta. 1899. Source: Glenbow Archives NA-949-18

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At this time, the Provisional District of Alberta included areas of present day Alberta from the United States border in the south to areas immediately north of Lac La Biche, but did not extend as far east as the present day boundary of Alberta. The Provisional District of Assiniboia included present-day southern Saskatchewan.
ELÉONORE HAMELIN’S SCRIP EXPERIENCE

FIGURE 17A Page 1 of Land Scrip Application (Form A) of Eléanore Hamelin (September 21, 1900). Source: LAC RG15, Vol. 1350.
FIGURE 17B Page 2 of Land Scrip Application (Form A) of Éléonore Hamelin (September 21, 1900) with a copy of her Certificate of Baptism (inset) issued September 8, 1900.
In most instances, individuals who completed applications for scrip endorsed the application by marking an “X” in place of their signature. This was not the case for Eléonore’s scrip application.

On November 27, 1900, scrip coupons A1064 and A2569 were issued in Eléonore’s name. The scrip coupons were issued in 1900, however, they were not used until 1908. Our research to date has not revealed where the scrip coupons had been delivered, if Eléonore signed the receipt for her scrip coupons, or if a third party signed on her behalf. We have not yet located these documents within the collection held at Library and Archives Canada. In 1908, a Quit Claim was signed by Eléonore assigning the land she had purchased with her scrip to John Heber Haslam. A Quit Claim was used to transfer interest in a piece of property from one person to another.

**FIGURE 18** Quit Claim Deed of Eléonore Hamelin, executed at Lac La Biche and sworn at Edmonton on April 2, 1908. Source: LAC RG15, Vol. 1466.
FIGURE 19 Assignment from Eléonore Hamelin to John Heber Haslam dated January 16, 1908 for NE ¼ and E ½ of SE ¼ 36-24-26 W3rd.
(Inset) Signature of Eléonore Hamelin on the Assignment to John Heber Haslam.
On January 16, 1908, Eléonore signed an agreement to transfer her interest in the land she had purchased with her scrip coupons to John Heber Haslam, a financial agent from St. Paul, Minnesota. Mr. Haslam purchased land scrip from two other individuals in Lac La Biche and his name appears on a number of other assignments from Métis grantees. Eléonore received $1 for the land. The Quit Claim was signed by Eléonore at Lac La Biche on April 2, 1908.

The land purchased with Eléonore’s scrip was located in Saskatchewan. According to the Rule of Location, Eléonore had to appear in person to locate her claim. This rule therefore meant Eléonore had to travel to the Dominion Land Office in Battleford, Saskatchewan. On current roadways, Eléonore had to travel approximately 850 kilometres from Lac La Biche to Battleford and back again.

**FIGURE 20** Map showing Dominion Land Offices between 1906–1931 with the distance Eléanore would have travelled to locate her scrip.

Since Eléonore did not obtain letters patent to the land from the Lands Patent Branch of the Department of the Interior, it is not clear why Eléonore would have travelled to Battleford to locate her scrip.

Eléanore’s experience with scrip was very similar to many other people in Lac La Biche. In 1900, 751 individual Scrip Applications were made. 633 of those Applications were for money scrip while 118 Applications were for land scrip. Of the 118 Applications for land scrip, 111 applications were successful and only 1 Applicant applied their scrip coupons to land and eventually received letters patent to their lands.

It is not known what percentage of Métis individuals applied for scrip, only that many land scrip coupons ended up in the hands of third parties.

**Land Scrip in Lac La Biche**

- 118 Land Scrip Applicants
- 236 Scrip Coupons Issued

- Insufficient Information (documents not yet located to show application or assignment of scrip coupon). 25%
- Scrip Assigned to 3rd Party. 74%
- Letters Patent acquired. 1%

**FIGURE 21** Chart showing the ways in which Métis land scrip coupons were used by the Métis at Lac La Biche.

Source: LAC RG15, Volumes 1444 to 1468, MAP Laboratory.
Like Eléanore, many other individuals who received land scrip during the 1900 Scrip Commission assigned their land scrip to third parties. According to the Rule of Location, each individual would have had to travel to the Dominion Land Office responsible for administering the lands they wanted to purchase. It is not clear why so many individuals would have made such long journeys if they did not intend on purchasing the land themselves. And, in practice, few did. It is commonly accepted that in a vast number of cases land scrip assigned to third parties was not located by the Métis individuals to whom it had been issued—as required by law—but rather by fraudulent impersonators. This process was described in a legal memo by the Department of Justice in 1921:

*It appears that the scrip was handed to the half-breeds by the agent of the Indian Department and it was then purchased, for small sums of course, by speculators. However, the half-breed himself was required by the Department of the Interior to appear in person at the office of the land agent and select his land and hand over the scrip. In order to get over this difficulty, the speculator would employ the half-breed to impersonate the breed entitled to the scrip. This practice appears to have been very widely indulged in at one time.*


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**FIGURE 22** Dominion Land Offices travelled to from Lac La Biche to locate land scrip and the number of scrip coupons located at each office.
It was very common for scrip lands to be assigned to third parties, not just in Lac La Biche. These third parties were both individuals and corporations and they obtained scrip to use as a tool for land speculation. One such individual was Richard Secord of Edmonton. Richard Secord, along with his business partner, John A. McDougall, had the scrip coupons of 37 individuals in Lac La Biche assigned to them. Those assignments amount to a total of 8,880 acres of land from just one community.

In 1921, a complaint of forgery and impersonation was made against Richard Secord. Flora Taylor, a Métis woman, testified that she had impersonated Elizabeth Hislop at the Dominion Lands Office in Edmonton. Secord had paid Flora 10 dollars and a grey shawl to say that she was Elizabeth in order to locate Elizabeth's entitlement so her land grant could be assigned to Secord. The Justice Department knew scrip speculators had been using forgeries to use scrip coupons to obtain lands to be sold to newcomers at a profit. Backlash to this case came swiftly from the prairie establishment. James Lougheed, then senator for Alberta, argued “there were a good many irregularities amounting to fraud and perjury in connection with the location of these lands,” and the law should be changed to prevent prosecutions of fraud in relation to Half-breed scrip lands. Before Secord could be brought to trial, the Criminal Code was changed. A three-year time limit for the prosecution of Métis scrip frauds was added to the Criminal Code. Because the fraudulent activity had occurred a number of years in the past, the change effectively decriminalized scrip fraud.


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CREATION OF THE MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA: In Alberta, a political outrage followed the unelected Canadian Senate's sudden amendment to the Criminal Code as it was seemingly designed to change the law to protect a well-to-do Edmonton land developer at the expense of Métis grantees. A federal election occurred in the fall of 1921 and scrip fraud was a campaign issue. The conservatives failed to elect a single Member of Parliament.

The Métis in Alberta had petitioned the government to act on their behalf in the past. In the 1920s, the Métis began to organize themselves politically and began creating alliances with those who supported their position. In 1928, the Métis Association of Alberta (MAA), as it was then called, was established to fight for the rights of the Métis in Alberta. In the 1930s, the MAA was successful in pressuring the provincial government (under the leadership of the United Farmers of Alberta) to create a commission (the Ewing Commission) to look into the social and economic issues of the Métis, including land rights.

In 1938, the pressure put on the provincial government by the MAA was successful. The Metis Population Betterment Act was introduced, setting aside a large amount of land for the Métis. Though this was an important victory for the Métis, it did not resolve the legacy left to the Métis by the scrip system and the land speculation and fraud it encouraged. Rather, this was a social welfare initiative undertaken by the provincial government, who had had no direct hand in Métis scrip.

NEW FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT AND SCRIP: The injustice of the Métis scrip system has not gone unnoticed. The Supreme Court of Canada has said that “the history of scrip speculation and devaluation is a sorry chapter in our nation’s history.” But, for generations, the Métis had nowhere to turn for redress. For Métis in Alberta, that changed on November 16, 2017, when the Métis Nation of Alberta and the Government of Canada signed the historic Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation. The framework agreement sets out a formal negotiation process and defined subjects to be negotiated. One of the three priority areas of the agreement is exploring ways of settling the outstanding claims of the Métis Nation within Alberta, including claims relating to Métis scrip issued pursuant to the Dominion Lands Act. While the framework agreement does not determine the outcome of the negotiations, the agreement acknowledges the need to address the injustices suffered by the Métis Nation as a result of the scrip system and declares a shared goal to develop a solution promoting reconciliation between the Métis Nation of Alberta and Canada.

FIGURE 25 MNA President, Audrey Poitras, and Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, Carolyn Bennett, signing the MNA-Canada Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation. Image courtesy of the Métis Nation of Alberta. For more information about the current status of the reconciliation work, please visit albertametis.com.

GLOSSARY

Applicant: An individual whose name appears on an application form for either Manitoba Métis Affidavits or Northwest Scrip Applications.

Certificate: a document certified by the scrip commissioner that a claimant was entitled to scrip; certificates were filled out in duplicate or triplicate, one copy being given to the claimant and the other copy or copies forwarded to the Department of the Interior.

Grantee: a Métis person whose claim to scrip has been recognized and approved by a scrip commissioner or the Department of the Interior.

Half-breed scrip: a document or coupon that entitled the holder to a specified amount of dominion lands specifically issued to a Métis person with the intent of “extinguishing” his or her Aboriginal title; Half-breed scrip was issued either as money scrip or land scrip; money scrip was issued in dollar amounts and entitled the bearer to use the coupon toward the purchase of available homestead lands; land scrip was issued in acre amounts and entitled the named individual to use the coupon to locate or purchase available homestead lands.

Homestead lands: lands available for selection by a homesteader.

Letters patent: issued by the federal government to confirm rights to a particular portion of land; sometimes referred to as a “deed” or “title deed.”

Rule of location: the requirement that no person other than the scrip grantee could use the land scrip coupon to acquire or locate land.

Rupertsland: A large territory consisted of all lands drained by rivers flowing into the Hudson Bay, or the Hudson Bay drainage basin. This territory was acquired by the Hudson’s Bay Company Charter of 1670 as a grant from Prince Rupert. Also known as Rupert’s Land and a major part of the total Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) territory. After lengthy negotiations, this large territory was formally transferred to the Dominion of Canada on July 15, 1870.

Witness declaration: a form filled out and signed by a person who knew the claimant and could verify the information given by the applicant.

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Library and Archives Canada
RG15, Folio 165, Liber 151, patent fiat 315770;
RG15, Folio 95, Liber 74, patent fiat 644501;
RG15, Vol. 1350;
RG15, Vol. 1408;
RG15, Vol. 1418, File 600897;
RG15, Vol. 1466;

Provincial Archives of Alberta
Alberta Homestead Records
1970.313, Reel 2001, File 43481

FURTHER READING


Frank J. Tough and Leah Dorion, “the claims of the Half-breeds ... have been finally closed”: A Study of Treaty Ten and Treaty Five Adhesion Scrip,” for The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. October, 1993.


For a differing view on Métis Scrip see

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