

## A Little History

Henry Hudson arrived in the Bay in 1610. He and his son were set adrift in a boat by his crew and no one knows if they ever got ashore. Sir Thomas Button came looking for Hudson two years later and explored the mouth of the Churchill River. For the next two hundred years the territory would be thinly populated by Indians and fur traders.

Lord Selkirk, a Scottish philanthropist, planted displaced Scottish and Irish tenant farmers in the Red River valley in 1811. The colony grew painfully until the 1860s when settlers began pouring in.

In 1869 the new Dominion of Canada bought broad territorial rights from the Hudson's Bay Company for £300,000 and some land. Immediately Métis Louis Riel led the Red River colony in revolt.

The Métis, French-Indian hunters and boat men, threatened by the arrival of new white settlers from Ontario, stopped the just-appointed Governor from entering the colony, occupied Fort Garry and formed a national council. The council wanted the territory accepted as a province, and the question probably would have been resolved peacefully if the Métis had not executed one of their prisoners. The government sent a military expedition, and the Métis retreated to the Saskatchewan River valley.

Manitoba, now dominated by the new immigrants, became a province in 1870. Riel was elected to and expelled from Parliament, banished from the country and committed to an asylum. He became a U.S. citizen, taught school in Montana, and returned to lead a second rebellion from Saskatchewan in 1885. He was captured, tried and hanged. The execution would remain an issue in Canadian politics for decades to come.

### The Buffalo with the Roman Nose

On August 2, 1870, the Canadian government arranged for Manitoba to have a coat-of-arms. It would feature a buffalo.

Some thirty-three years later the Manitoba government discovered that the federal government's order-in-council had never been registered. It passed its own order-in-council and got in touch with the College of Heralds in England.

On May 10, 1905, the College announced that a coat-of-arms had been granted. It described it as, "Vert on a rock, a Buffalo Statant proper, on a chief Argent the Cross of St. George." This meant a buffalo standing on a rock, on a green background, with a Cross of St. George, backed by silver, over his head.

The design arrived with a bill for 25 pounds and 1 shilling. It had one striking peculiarity—the buffalo had what could only be considered a human face, its features depicted in contrasting areas of black and white: deep-set eyes, a high forehead, a stiff upper lip and a noble nose. There



*Manitoba's coat-of-arms.*

were faint suggestions of a goatee and either horns or curly locks.

The government was disconcerted, but the coat-of-arms was official and for some years it appeared on provincial documents. Then various departments began substituting buffaloes, with proper buffalo faces. In 1946 the King's Printer decided that substitutions had gone too far and he restored the strange original. It can be found today on the provincial flag, on official stationery and various documents and at the Provincial Garage on Kennedy Street in Winnipeg, carved in stone.

### The Economy

Manitoba is in an economic holding pattern; times have been worse but they could be better.

In the early and mid-1970s the province's economic indicators were among the most discouraging in the country. Since then things have improved relatively. Manitoba is now doing as well as most of the other provinces, better than some.

The province should have a real growth of about 2 per cent this year, down from 3.5 per cent last year.

The population, which fell from 1978 to 1980, is climbing again—it is now an estimated 1,033,000.