



The Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon on the banks of the South Saskatchewan River. Across the river is the University.

Wascana Centre includes the park, the legislative building, the University of Regina, the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History and the Saskatchewan Centre of Arts.

Saskatoon, the second largest city, has close to 150,000 people and is one of the loveliest cities in Canada. The handsome buildings of the University of Saskatchewan are spread around the lush campus on the banks of the South Saskatchewan River.

Moose Jaw, the third city, which now has about 40,000 people, had its origins as a railroad camp during the construction of the CPR. Its name probably derives from an Indian word meaning "warm breezes." Prince Albert has around 30,000 people; Swift Current, Yorkton and North Battleford have fewer than 20,000 each.

Nearly one-fourth of Saskatchewan's people live in communities with populations of less than 1,000.

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## A Message to Macdonald

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The historical grievances of the prairies began before Saskatchewan was a province and before most of the white settlers arrived. The Métis, the people of mixed Indian and European ancestry who had been on the prairies for generations, found the opening up of the West to farmer settlers threatening. When the federal government failed to recognize their land claims, they rebelled, in 1869 and again in 1885. They were led by Louis Riel, who was hanged for treason after the second uprising, and by Gabriel Dumont, who escaped to temporary exile in the United States.

It is now recognized that the Métis claims had substance and that a more responsive government might have avoided the final conflict. Dumont tried in vain to gain the government's attention in 1882 when he sent a petition directly to the Prime Minister. A portion of it follows:



Gabriel Dumont. After the Rebellion he escaped to the U.S. and joined Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show.

ST ANTOINE DE'PADOU,  
SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN,  
4th September, 1882.

To the Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald:

Sir,—We the undersigned French half-breeds, for the most part settled on the west bank of the Saskatchewan, in the district of Prince Albert, N.W.T., hereby approach you, in order to set forth with confidence the painful position in which we are placed . . .

"Compelled, most of us, to abandon the prairie, which can no longer furnish us the means of subsistence, we came in large numbers, during the course of the summer, and settled on the south branch of the Saskatchewan . . . The surveyed lands being already occupied or sold, we were compelled to occupy lands not yet surveyed, being ignorant, for the most part, also, of the regulations of the Government respecting Dominion lands. Great then was our astonishment and perplexity when we were notified, that when the lands are surveyed we shall be obliged to pay \$2 an acre to the Government, if our lands are included in odd-numbered sections. We desire, moreover, to keep close together, in order more easily to secure a school and a church. We are poor people and cannot pay for our land without utter ruin, and losing the fruits of our labor and seeing our lands pass into the hands of strangers, who will go to the land office at Prince Albert and pay the amount fixed by the Government. In our anxiety we appeal to your sense of justice as Minister of the Interior and head of the Government, and beg you to reassure us speedily, by directing that we shall not be disturbed on our lands . . ."

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