

A Guide to the Louis Riel Papers

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In 1978, the University of Alberta received a negotiated grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to establish the Louis Riel Project. The purpose of the Project is to find, edit, and publish everything written by Louis Riel. It is expected that the *Collected Papers/Ecrits complets* will be in print in time for the centennial of the North-West Rebellion (1985). G.F.G. Stanley is General Editor of the Project; Thomas Flanagan is Deputy Editor; individual volumes have been delegated to Flanagan, Gilles Martel, Glen Campbell, and Raymond Huel. This undertaking is unique in Canadian scholarship in that there has not yet been published a set of the collected papers of any major Canadian public figure. Historical documents have been extensively published by the Champlain Society and Hudson's Bay Record Society, but these have usually been pre-existing collections already housed in one place. This is in sharp contrast to documentary publishing in the United States, where the papers of many major statesmen, such as Washington, Jefferson, Adams, and Madison, have been or are now being collected and printed. Riel is a good place to begin this sort of work in Canada, for his writings are not voluminous. The four volumes anticipated for the *Collected Papers/Ecrits complets* constitute a project of manageable size.

If the small size of the literary *corpus* eases the Project's task, there is a compensating factor of difficulty: wide dispersal of Riel's papers over much of North America. The reasons are worth observing:

- he lived before the age of the typewriter and duplicating machine, so it was hard for him to retain copies of his correspondence;
- he never occupied public office, so he did not have a clerical staff to make hand or letterpress copies, or to store and file his papers;
- he was on the move throughout much of his life, so there was a limit to what he could carry with him. Fortunately he left many

*The research presented in this article has been financially supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada as part of the Louis Riel Project. Views expressed in the article are the opinion of the authors and are not necessarily shared by other members of the Riel Project.

- papers for safekeeping at the family home in St-Vital, Manitoba, and family members retained much of the correspondence he sent them;
- he was a *cause célèbre* in his own lifetime, so that his papers were kept by individuals as curiosities and souvenirs. A good many items have disappeared without trace from governmental or ecclesiastical archives;
 - his papers have acquired high financial value in recent years. When discovered in attics or cellars, they now typically are sold at auction rather than donated to archives. This contributes to dispersal as archives and private collectors vie with one another to obtain these valuable items.

The dispersal of Riel's papers meant that the Project had to make a major effort to compile an inventory of all his writings. The core of this effort was to search for *holograph manuscripts*, but other classes of material were also taken into account: hand, typed, or photographed *copies* of documents whose originals could not be found; and *printed sources*, including books, periodicals, government publications, pamphlets, newspapers, and proclamations of the Provisional Governments of the Red River Rebellion.

The Riel inventory is now largely complete, though new items continue to appear (see Fig. 1). A synopsis of the inventory, listing all relevant archives and collections¹ (see *Appendix A*), reveals seventy-three collections in thirty-eight different archives. Thirty-three of the archives are in Canada, located in every province between British Columbia and New Brunswick. Five archives are in the United States, in the states of North Dakota, Minnesota, Rhode Island, and in the District of Columbia. Twelve of the thirty-eight archives are organs of the Roman Catholic Church, such as diocesan chancelleries, religious houses, or seminaries. Seven are university libraries. The rest are public archives maintained by various levels of government, or archives of societies or corporations. Most of the archival holdings are relatively small, consisting of only a few documents. Only the five largest, defined as those holding more than fifty manuscript pages, are singled out for discussion below: the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Archives de l'Archevêché de Saint-Boniface, Public Archives of Canada, Archives de la Chancellerie de l'Archevêché de Montréal, and Archives du Séminaire de Québec. Material available in printed sources is also reviewed (see list in *Appendix B*), and finally there is a discussion of perhaps the most interesting subject of all: those papers which are now lost but may someday come to light. It will be, at best, several years before Riel's *Collected Papers/Ecrits complets* can appear in print. In the meantime, this documentary guide may be useful to historical researchers, archivists and librarians.

¹ We are now aware of ten private collectors who own or claim to own Riel documents. Names are not given in this article because we have not been able to inspect much of this material and also because there are undoubtedly many other owners whose identity we do not yet know.

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF MANITOBA (PAM)

Of the collections at the PAM which contain Riel material, two are very extensive, the Louis Riel Collection (MG 3 D 1) and the Riel Family Papers (MG 3 D 2).

The Louis Riel Collection consists of 643 numbered documents, of which almost two hundred are in Riel's hand or were composed by him. The other documents are chiefly correspondence from family members or friends, and are also essential to the study of his life. The collection is available on microfilm, and its usefulness is further enhanced by a comprehensive calendar. The collection was built up from two main sources. One is Riel's correspondence with Joseph Dubuc, 1870-74. Riel wrote frequently to Dubuc in these years, sometimes brief notes, sometimes long letters discussing Manitoba politics in great detail. The presence of Dubuc's replies in the collection makes the correspondence even more valuable. The second main source is a group of papers donated to the PAM in 1943 by the Société Historique Métisse. These were primarily documents which had been preserved by Riel's family, as well as some papers which had been brought to the Archbishop of St-Boniface in 1885 and given to the Riel family, upon their demand, in 1932. These papers chiefly consist of Riel's letters to his mother and other family members, 1864-1885. There are also drafts of letters to many people outside his family; and in most cases the draft is all we have, since the originals, if they were ever sent, have not been preserved. A long series of drafts giving Riel's view of his actions in 1869-70 and of subsequent events in Manitoba² seems to be sketches for an article or pamphlet which was never published. Also in the collection are the two diaries Riel kept in August and October, 1885.³

The PAM has additionally acquired other items over the years and put them in the Louis Riel Collection. Many of these are not too significant, being merely photocopies of texts housed elsewhere. However, one item of particular importance is a xerox copy of the diary kept by Riel during the Rebellion of 1885. The text itself was sold at auction in 1971 to private collectors. The xerox copy, made when the diary was taken to the PAM for authentication, is quite legible except for one missing page.⁴

The second noteworthy collection at the PAM is the Riel Family Papers. These were discovered at the Riel family house in 1966, when it was acquired by Parks Canada as a national historical site. There is no obvious explanation of why the family should have retained these particular papers when so many others went to the PAM in 1943 via the Société Historique Métisse. The collection consists of forty-five folders in five boxes, about half of which contain texts by Louis. This material is of several different types. There are thirty-eight letters or drafts of letters from the years 1870-85, mostly addressed to Riel's mother or other family members. Particularly richly represented are the years

2 Partially published by A.H. de Trémaudan in a series of articles in the *Canadian Historical Review* 4 (June 1923): 132-44; 5 (March 1924): 146-59; 6 (Sept. 1925): 222-36.

3 Published in English translation in Thomas Flanagan (ed.), *The Diaries of Louis Riel* (Edmonton, 1976).

4 English translation in *ibid.*

Kenille New York.
 9 Fevrier 1878.
 E. P. Lachapelle. Ec. M. D.

Mon Cher Docteur,

Je t'écris aujourd'hui comme
 me si je n'avois pas cessé
 d'être en correspondance avec
 toi, depuis deux ans.
 Ne sois donc pas surpris
 de voir arriver une lettre
 de moi, et encore plus
 écrite du cœur que de
 la main. Je te suis ob-
 ligé plus que jamais.

Fig. 1 Letter of Louis Riel to Dr. E.P. Lachapelle, 9 February 1878. Acquired by the Public Archives of Canada in the summer of 1980, this is the most recent of Riel's letters to come to light. (PAC, MG 27 I F 3, No. 41B.)

Je te remercie de tout le
trouble que tu t'es donné
pour me secourir dans
un temps où je ne pre-
nais aucun soin de
moi-même. Je te suis
reconnaisant, ou ne
prend plus, des démarches
que tu as faites pour
moi durant les années
qu'il a plu à Dieu de
m'envoyer.

Le Docteur Roy, Mon
général ami, m'a dit,
lorsque je fus redevenu
bien, que toi-même avais
pris les moyens de me

faire transférer de la
Longue Pointe, à Beauport.
Je t'en remercie d'autant
plus cordialement que
c'est dans ce dernier
asile que j'ai eu le bonheur
de recouvrer le sens com-
mun. J'y ai été traité
aussi charitablement qu'un
aliéné peut l'être.

Le Docteur Roy m'a tou-
jours parlé de toi avec
beaucoup de déférence,
Tu n'en doutes pas. Il
m'a fait promettre de
t'écrire aussitôt que je
serais rendu hors des lignes.

Tu comprends que je n'états pas
 pour t'oublier. Et je n'as pas
 hérité à lui faire cette pro-
 messe. J'ai un peu retardé à
 l'exécuter. Mais tu ne m'en
 voudras pas pour cela.

Mes respects à Monsieur
 Cauchapelle et à ta bonne vil-
 lante famille. Que Dieu te rende
 au centuple tout ce que tu as
 bien voulu faire en ma faveur.
 Je me réjouis de tes succès.
 Je t'en félicite.

Mes respects chez Monsieur
 Francis Rivoit, à Monsieur ^{ami} Joseph
 Tasse. - Monsieur Leroux de
 Keewille te salue.

crois passé pour la vie
 ton reconnaissant ami Louis Riel.

1872, 1878, and 1879. There is also an interesting draft of a letter to President Ulysses Grant, ca. December 1875, seeking American help for an invasion of Western Canada.⁵

Of special importance is a group of about ninety poems which make possible for the first time the assessment of Riel as a poet. Previously his work was known only from the posthumously published *Poésies religieuses et politiques*⁶ and from a few scattered texts which survived elsewhere. These manuscripts show that poetry was more significant in Riel's life than was previously recognized. Thirty-five of the poems are in a notebook which can be positively dated 1864-66. These texts, now available in print, give a candid view of Riel as a young man in Montreal.⁷ Another notebook, unfortunately torn in many places, seems to have been used for poetic composition in the late 1870s and early 1880s. It provides important insights into this emotionally troubled period of Riel's life. Numerous individual manuscripts of poems are also available, many of which are not explicitly dated but may be datable as the Project's work progresses. There are, too, some short prose texts in this collection: several prayers, and most notably a sketch of a theocratic utopia which probably stems from Riel's Montana years. This is probably part of his lost book, the *Massinahican*, discussed below.

The Riel Family Papers have not yet made their full impression on Riel studies. Certain items have been published, and the collection has been consulted by some recent researchers;⁸ but the facts which can be gleaned from these documents have not yet been systematically incorporated into the account of Riel's life. Preparations are now under way at the PAM to microfilm the collection and provide a finding aid.

ARCHIVES DE L'ARCHEVÊCHÉ DE SAINT-BONIFACE (AASB)

All items written by Riel are part of the Fonds Taché, being records generated during the period when A.A. Taché was Bishop (later Archbishop) of Saint-Boniface. Included are thirty-one letters or telegrams by Riel, mostly to Taché but a few to other clerics. This correspondence would be central to a study which, although highly desirable, has not yet been done, namely, a full account of the relationship between Taché and Riel. Most of Taché's replies to Riel are not in the AASB, though some can be found elsewhere. The Fonds Taché also contains a number of miscellaneous manuscripts by Riel, some of which deserve special mention. There are two drafts, in the hand of Georges Dugas, of the "Déclaration des habitants de la terre de Rupert et du Nord-Ouest," which Riel issued on 8 December, 1869, when he established the first Provisional Government.⁹ Widely distributed in French and English, it was the

5 Hartwell Bowsfield (ed.), "Louis Riel's Letter to President Grant, 1875," *Saskatchewan History* 21 (Winter 1968): 67-75.

6 (Montréal, 1886).

7 Gilles Martel, Glen Campbell, Thomas Flanagan (eds.), *Louis Riel: Poésies de jeunesse* (St-Boniface, 1977).

8 Beyond the references in notes 5 and 7, see also Martel, *Le Messianisme de Louis Riel (1844-1885)*, (Thèse de doctorat; Paris, 1976); Flanagan, *Louis "David" Riel: "Prophet of the New World"* (Toronto, 1979); also one poem, "Au Dieu du ciel la Providence. . .," *Mosaic* 3 (April 1970): 123-26.

9 Thomas Flanagan, "Political Theory of the Red River Resistance: The Declaration of December 8, 1869," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 11 (March 1978): 153-64.

DECLARATION
Of the People of Rupert's Land and the North
West.

WHEREAS, It is admitted by all men as a fundamental principle, that the public authority commands the obedience and respect of its subjects. It is also admitted, that a people, when it has no Government, is free to adopt one form of Government in preference to another, to give or to refuse allegiance to that which is proposed. In accordance with the above first principle, the people of this Country had obeyed and respected that authority to which the circumstances surrounding its infancy compelled it to be subject.

A company of adventurers known as the "Hudson's Bay Company," and invested with certain powers granted by His Majesty (Charles II.), established itself in Rupert's Land, AND IN THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY, for trading purposes only. This Company, consisting of many persons, required a certain constitution. But as there was a question of commerce only, their constitution was framed in reference thereto. Yet, since there was at that time no government to see to the interests of a people already existing in the country, it became necessary for judicial affairs to have recourse to the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company. Thus inaugurated that species of government, which, slightly modified by subsequent circumstances, ruled this country up to a recent date.

WHEREAS, that government, thus accepted, was far from answering to the wants of the people, and became more and more so as the population increased in numbers, and as the country was developed, and commerce extended, until the present day, when it commands a place amongst the Colonies; and this people ever actuated by the above mentioned principles, had generously supported the aforesaid government, and gave to it a faithful allegiance; when, contrary to the law of nations, in March, 1869, that said Government surrendered and transferred to Canada all the rights which it had or pretended to have in this territory, by transactions with which the people were considered unworthy to be made acquainted.

AND WHEREAS, it is also generally admitted that a people is at liberty to establish any form of government it may consider suitable to its wants, as soon as the power to which it was subject abandons it, or attempts to subjugate it without its consent, to a foreign power; and maintain that no right can be transferred to such foreign power. Now, therefore,

1st. We, the Representatives of the people in Council assembled at Upper Fort Garry, on the 24th day of November, 1869, after having invoked the God of nations, relying on these fundamental moral principles, solemnly declare in the name of our constituents and in our own names, before God and man, that from the day on which the Government we had always respected, abandoned us, by transferring to a strange power the sacred authority confided to it, the people of Rupert's Land and the North-West became free and exempt from all allegiance to the said Government.

2d. That we refuse to recognise the authority of Canada, which pretends to have a right to coerce us and impose upon us a despotic form of government, still more contrary to our rights and interests as British subjects than was that Government to which we had subjected ourselves through necessity up to a recent date.

3d. That by sending an expedition on the 1st of November, ult., charged to drive back Mr. William McDougall and his companions coming in the name of Canada to rule us with the rod of despotism without a previous notification to that effect, we have but acted conformably to that sacred right which commands every citizen to offer energetic opposition to prevent his country being enslaved.

4th. That we continue and shall continue to oppose with all our strength the establishing of the Canadian authority in our country under the announced form. And in case of persistence on the part of the Canadian Government to enforce its obnoxious policy upon us, by force of arms, we protest beforehand against such an unjust and unlawful course, and we declare the said Canadian Government responsible before God and men for the innumerable evils which may be caused by so unwarrantable a course.

It is known, therefore, to the world in general and to the Canadian Government in particular, that as we have always heretofore successfully defended our country in frequent wars with the neighboring tribes of Indians, who are now on friendly relations with us, we are firmly resolved in future not less than in the past, to repel all invasions from whatsoever quarter they may come.

And furthermore, we do declare and proclaim in the name of the people of Rupert's Land and the North-West, that we have on the said 24th day of November, 1869, above mentioned, established a Provisional Government, and hold it to be the only and lawful authority now in existence in Rupert's Land and the North-West, which claims the obedience and respect of the people.

That meanwhile we hold ourselves in readiness to enter into such negotiations with the Canadian Government, as may be favorable for the good government and prosperity of this people.

In support of this declaration, relying on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge ourselves, on oath, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor to each other.

Issued at Fort Garry this 8th day of December, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine.

(Signed.)

JOHN BRUCE, PRESIDENT.
LOUIS RIEL, SECRETARY.

Fig. 2 Declaration of the People of Rupert's Land and the North West, December 1869. An example of the broadsides issued by Riel during the Red River Rebellion. (PAC, RG 6 C 1, Vol. 316, File 995)

major argument Riel produced to justify his actions (see Fig. 2). There are also several other proclamations of the Red River Rebellion. From 1885, there is a copy, in the hand of Father Fourmond, of the abjuration of heresies which Riel signed. It is accompanied by several other documents relating to the recantation.

Unfortunately, there have been losses over the years in the AASB's holding of Riel's manuscripts. Dr. Daniel Clark, who visited Taché after testifying at Riel's trial in 1885, spoke of letters written during Riel's youth, in which he claimed not to be Louis Riel but David Mordecai, a Jew sent to redeem mankind. Although Clark is a suspect witness, he may well have seen letters written by Louis when he was a student in Montreal;¹⁰ yet the AASB now have nothing from Riel prior to 1870. Also, Taché sent two long letters by Riel to friends in Quebec as proof of Riel's insanity, documents which were never returned.¹¹ Finally, in 1940-41, priests of the Oblate order microfilmed much of the documentary collection of the AASB. The microfilm, housed at the Archives Deschâtelets, in Ottawa, contains four letters from Riel to Taché which can no longer be found in the AASB. Their disappearance has not been explained.

There is one other important holding of the AASB, a large typescript of 82 single-spaced pages headed "Copie des écrits personnels de Riel." Some of the contents are letters to Riel, but most were composed by him. All date from his imprisonment in Regina, 23 May—16 November, 1885. The original papers seem to have been taken from Riel's cell by his confessor, Father André, and deposited at Saint-Boniface. They remained there, unused by researchers, until 1932, when the Riel family demanded their return. Their spokesman was Camille Teillet, a local resident connected by marriage to the Riel family. The Bishop complied with the request, but before handing over the papers he caused a typescript to be made. It must have been done in great haste, for it is filled with typographical errors, some of which render passages almost incoherent. But it is better than nothing; and nothing is what we would have of many of these texts, were it not for the typescript.

Some of the documents, notably the diaries of August and October, 1885, must have gone to the Société Historique Métisse; for they are now in the PAM, Louis Riel Collection. Six other manuscripts now repose in the Archives de la Société Historique de Saint-Boniface, in the same complex of buildings as the AASB. Four of the six were badly damaged in the fire which gutted the cathedral in 1968. (Others of the missing documents may have been totally destroyed in the fire; there is no way to know for certain.) This leaves about twenty texts whose originals have vanished and which are thus only known as they appear in the typescript. They mostly record the revelations which Riel experienced in prison in the months after he was condemned to death. There is no circulating edition of the AASB holdings, but there is an excellent nominal index which allows quick location of all correspondence to and from persons in whom the researcher is interested.

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA (PAC)

The papers of John A. Macdonald (MG 26 A) contain a vast amount of information about Riel, but very few texts actually composed by him. The only

10 See Flanagan, *Louis "David" Riel: "Prophet of the New World"*, 12-17.

11 Now at ASTR.

documents in his hand are a letter to Macdonald and another to Judge Hugh Richardson, both from 1885. There is also a copy, in a clerk's hand, of a letter from Riel to Poundmaker urging him to take Battleford. The original of this important text has mysteriously vanished.

The papers of Edgar Dewdney (MG 27 I C 4), Governor of the North-West Territories at the time of the Rebellion, are richer in Riel holographs. They contain about a hundred pages of scrap paper used by Riel when he was in prison. It appears that he meant to discard these papers, but the authorities decided to save them. All are rough drafts and sketches, often torn and containing many erasures and corrections. The texts are not individually of great value, but they help to fill out a portrait of Riel's last months (see Fig. 3). They also enable the researcher to authenticate several compositions, allegedly by Riel, which are found in copies in other hands or in the contemporary press. The chief item in this category is the major essay "Les Métis du Nord-Ouest," which was posthumously printed in the Montreal *Daily Star*.¹² One special section in the Dewdney Papers is the "Riel Fragments", seventeen folders of pieces of manuscript. A few pages are intact enough to be legible, but most cannot be sufficiently deciphered so as to yield a useful text. Perhaps some day a genius at jig-saw puzzles will be able to fit the pieces together.

¹² Montreal *Daily Star*, 28 November 1885.

The reading of the scripture
 And of its Holy letter
 Helps on greatly: that is sure.
 But without the practice
 of its divine maxims
 Such reading goes too short a piece.
 The words first: then the hymns!

Louis "David" Riel.

Fig. 3 Poem: "The reading of the scripture. . . ." [85]/[11]/[16]. This fragment of verse is typical of many short texts authored by Riel when he was in prison. The original has disappeared but the text is preserved in a photograph in the Provincial Archives of Alberta (Ernest Brown Photograph Collection, B.1793)

By far the most important source at the PAC is in the records of the Department of Justice—Records Relating to Louis Riel and the North-West Uprising (RG 13 B 2). The first part of this series is the mass of papers seized at Batoche, supplemented by a few other documents collected as evidence against the rebels. The second and larger part consists of the papers accumulated by the Department of Justice in the course of prosecuting the prisoners. This includes, as an important subcategory, copies of the correspondence sent from prison by Riel. Unfortunately not all letters were retained. The series is probably complete for May, June, and early July, 1885, because at the time Riel had no alternative but to post letters through the prison commander. Later, his attorneys and his confessor were more than willing to smuggle out letters for him. Hence, there is little from mid-July onwards.

Of the 3600 pages in the Justice records, about 770 were composed, dictated, or written by Riel. The material can be divided into three main categories. First is the *prison correspondence* mentioned above. Some of this is extraordinarily interesting, consisting of long, carefully written letters to Governor Dewdney, Prime Minister Macdonald, and Riel's friends in Quebec. These letters give not only Riel's view of the Rebellion but also glimpses into his utopian plans for the future. For example, he calmly proposed to Macdonald a grand "imperial union" of the British Empire and the United States, in which his new religious cult would be established.¹³ Second are *the papers of the Exovedate*, or Provisional Government of the Rebellion. Technically, Riel was not a member of the council, but he deliberated with them and drafted correspondence to be recopied by the secretaries of the Exovedate. Here will be found drafts of the seditious letters which were produced against Riel at his trial. Again, several items which belong here have disappeared, probably taken long ago by souvenir-hungry civil servants. Thus, some of Riel's most incriminating letters are known today only from clerk's copies or from the trial transcript,¹⁴ even though trial testimony shows that the original manuscripts were in the court room. The third category consists of *Riel's personal papers* predating the Rebellion. He must have brought a box of documents with him from Montana, for there is much here which stems from that period of his life. There are drafts of letters to many people, including family members, his erstwhile fiancée Evelina Barnabé, and Ignace Bourget, retired Bishop of Montreal. There are also pages and pages of poetic composition in both French and English, the latter being more doggerel than poetry. Finally, there are extensive drafts of a book which Riel aspired to write (discussed further under "Lost Writings"). Numbered paragraphs set forth a philosophical system integrating his religious reforms with a metaphysics which seems to derive remotely from Leibniz' *Monadologie*. The system has not yet been thoroughly studied, so it is premature to pronounce too confidently about it.

The Department of Justice records also contain numerous texts composed by Riel after he came to the Saskatchewan district, though prior to the outbreak of the Rebellion. There are some notes for speeches and a few pieces of correspondence, but on the whole this part of the collection is disappointing.

13 PAC, RG 13 B 2, 1232-49.

14 Most conveniently available today in Desmond Morton (ed.), *The Queen v Louis Riel* (Toronto, 1974).

There is very little which sheds light on the crucial question of his turn toward violence in March 1885. A notebook of prayers and meditations from the winter of 1884-85¹⁵ gives some limited insights, but it deals very little with political matters. Although the Justice records are readily available on microfilm, they are not easy to use because there is no index or finding aid. The papers are ordered more or less chronologically, but many undated pages are simply thrown together in batches. Texts are often split up into pieces located many pages apart. Yet with all its difficulties, this collection is the main documentary source for the study of Riel's years in Montana and his role in the North-West Rebellion.

The PAC has also recently accessioned some Department of Justice Records which contain a rough typescript of the proceedings of Riel's trial (RG 13 A 4, Vol. 417). This typed version of the lost stenographic transcript made in the court room must now be considered the authoritative record of the trial, superseding the two versions, differing slightly from each other, which were published by the government in 1886.¹⁶ Appeal to the typescript may help to explain some of the obscurities which mar existing versions of Riel's two trial speeches.

The collection Louis "David" Riel (MG 27 I F 3) must also be mentioned. About half of its sixty numbered items are by Riel, of which about twenty are originals, the others being photocopies of holdings of other archives. There is also an unnumbered box of twenty-six xerox pages of writings, mostly poetry, done at the Beauport asylum (1876-77). The originals are in private hands. There is no particular theme to the collection. It holds a miscellaneous assortment of texts from all phases of Riel's life. The most unusual item is a large holy picture of Our Lady of Lourdes which Riel attached to the rebel flag in 1885. It bears a poem of his composition, pleading for miraculous deliverance (see Fig. 4). Also worth mentioning is a complete manuscript of Riel's poem on John A. Macdonald, which varies in more than a hundred places from the text published posthumously in *Poésies religieuses et politiques*. The collection has a good inventory and is conveniently available on microfilm.

ARCHIVES DE LA CHANCELLERIE DE L'ARCHEVÊCHÉ DE MONTRÉAL (ACAM) AND ARCHIVES DU SÉMINAIRE DE QUÉBEC (ASQ).

The ACAM, Collection Louis Riel, contains seventeen letters from Riel to Ignace Bourget, plus some additional notes enclosed in one of the letters. The series begins 2 January 1874 and ends 29 May 1876. The first nine letters were published some years ago by Léon Pouliot, the biographer of Bishop Bourget.¹⁷ Pouliot alluded briefly to the existence of the other letters but chose not to print them, claiming they were devoid of historical value, having been written by a madman in a lunatic asylum. This was a curious decision, since

15 English translation in Flanagan (ed.), *The Diaries of Louis Riel*.

16 *The Queen vs. Louis Riel* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1886), and in the *Epitome of Parliamentary Documents in Connection with the North-West Rebellion* (Ottawa: Maclean, Roger & Co., 1886). Desmond Morton reprinted the *Epitome* version in *The Queen v Louis Riel* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974).

17 Léon Pouliot, "Correspondance Louis Riel—Mgr Bourget," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* (December 1961): 430-40.

Vous vous appelez bien Notre Dame de Lourdes
 Vous dont le fils passa par des jours et d'années
 Et George dont le cœur fut transpercé sept fois
 Sur la douleur la plus amère.

Mère
 Dont l'âme souffrit tant de la crèche à la Croix!

Puis que vous choisirez le royaume de France
 Pour y faire régner votre grand-doncœur,
 Espérance de nos jours, la plus pure et la plus vraie,
 En lui, O que sa délivrance

comptera pour nous
 tout ce que nous en avons

Notre Dame de Lourdes!

Seigneur que nous avons
 tant accueillies et servies,

Seigneur nous du ciel, nous vous en supplions.

Prenez nos bonnes entreprises

Et que les fleurs vertissent.

Prenez nous d'innocence du mal et de ses vices.

Prenez pour nous afin que Dieu daigne à donner

des chants, les abbayes et même les églises.

Prenez pour nous de sa loi, Prenez notre bon Maître

Jésus-Christ de prouver à présent avec simplicité

que lui seul est Seigneur, Empereur, Roi, Monarque

Président, Czar, Premier, jusqu'à ce qu'il me marque

de l'écrou de ses élus, sans fada de ses anlets.

Prenez pour moi! Prenez que je réponde

à l'église de tout mon cœur et de

Prenez-moi pour fort par le monde

Prenez si vous n'avez jamais fidèle, à mon devoir

Louis David Riel

the eight letters written in 1876, after Riel's confinement in the asylum, are far more interesting than the earlier ones. Some give graphic accounts of life in the asylum and Riel's conflicts with the authorities. Others discuss at great length his revelations, his belief that Bishop Bourget had become Pope of the New World, and his visions of religious reform. Not least interesting is a long account of how Egyptians and Hebrews crossed the Atlantic Ocean to become the progenitors of the American Indians. Riel wrote frequently to Bourget from the asylum in Longue Pointe; but only one letter from Beauport survives, written shortly after Riel was transferred there 21 May 1876. He probably continued to bombard Bourget with letters, but about this time the Bishop retired from the Episcopal See of Montreal. His correspondence was no longer kept at the chancellery, so Riel's later letters have never been found. This is a great pity; for Bourget, we know, tried to dissuade Riel from his *idée fixe* of a prophetic mission, and it would be fascinating to read Riel's counterarguments.

At the ASQ is a collection entitled "carton Polygraphie 38, no. 8" containing 165 manuscript pages. These texts were written while Riel was an inmate at Beauport, 21 May 1876 to 23 January 1878. They were left with the chaplain, J. B. Z. Bolduc, and eventually deposited in ASQ. Included are a number of poems, some short prayers and revelations, and two long revelations in multiple drafts. The long texts, over which Riel obviously expended much effort, are very carefully constructed, full of symbolic allusions. They may have been intended as a sort of "Third Testament," the doctrinal basis of the new era of Christianity of which he claimed to be the prophet. They give, among other things, the rules about polygamy, incest, circumcision, a married clergy, and the Saturday Sabbath which were to mark his new cult.

The writings in ACAM and ASQ were virtually ignored for many years, but they are indispensable for understanding the religious side of Riel. No future interpretation of the man will be credible if it does not take account of these texts.

PRINTED SOURCES

One aspect of the Project's work has been an extensive search of books, pamphlets, journals, newspapers, government publications, and broadsides for texts by Riel. Not counting several items which are probably fabrications,¹⁸ we have found about two dozen poems, three dozen letters, fourteen broadside proclamations from the Red River Rebellion, and about fifteen miscellaneous texts. All are known only in printed form as the manuscripts have not been found.

Except for the posthumously published *Poésies religieuses et politiques*, the poems are not very important. They are mostly quite brief, often fragments of larger compositions. They must be used with care in assessing Riel's poetic merit, since we have no guarantee that the printed wording is the same as what he wrote. The three dozen letters are a more significant find. One important group is six seditious letters, produced as evidence in the trials of Riel and W.H. Jackson, whose manuscripts have disappeared and which are now

18 Discussed further in Thomas Flanagan, "Textual Authenticity and Riel's Identity," *Riel Project Bulletin* 2 (September 1979).

known from the trial transcripts. Also important is a number of letters Riel wrote in 1875-76, when his religious exaltation was most intense. These surfaced in the Quebec press in 1885, published to prove that Riel was insane and should not be executed. One might also mention the three "letters to the editor" of Montana newspapers, which provide some evidence about Riel in years when he was in the United States. The proclamations of the first Rebellion are an invaluable record of the aspirations of that movement. Riel did not have a chance to do much private writing in these months, so the proclamations are the best available sources. Some were distributed in both French and English, others in only one language. Some were printed in more than one version. The story has been partially told in Bruce Peel, *Early Printing in the Red River Settlement, 1859-1870*,¹⁹ but a more complete treatment is desirable.

The miscellaneous category is perhaps the most interesting. There are petitions of 1870 to the American government and of 1873 to the Canadian government, asking for redress of grievances.²⁰ The originals may exist somewhere in government archives, but have not yet been found. Fortunately the contents were printed in official papers. Another interesting item is a long revelation from March 1876, published by *La Minerve* in 1885 to suggest that Riel was insane.²¹ Finally, there are a number of writings from Riel's prison cell which appeared in the contemporary press. Some of these are mere curiosities, random notes on scraps of paper given to visitors. But several are long, carefully written essays on political or religious subjects. The most important is "Les Métis du Nord-Ouest," published by the Montreal *Daily Star* 28 November 1885. This lengthy essay tells something of the life of the Métis and sets out the theory of aboriginal rights which, in Riel's mind, justified the Rebellion of 1885. Unfortunately, the text seems incomplete, as if a sequel had been intended but never written. Also noteworthy is a short autobiography published in the Toronto *Globe* the day after Riel's execution. Containing several facts not otherwise known, it also gives Riel's view of his life as a preparation for his prophetic mission. Sadly, whoever edited the text (almost certainly Father André) cut it off in 1876, at the time of Riel's confinement in the asylum. We know from a surviving fragment of a draft²² that Riel intended to carry the story through to the end. Such are the perils of posthumous publication.

THE LOST WRITINGS

From clues in texts which are available to us, we can infer the existence of numerous writings by Riel which have disappeared from view, so that we have neither a manuscript nor a printed version. Discovery of these would do more than anything else to illuminate the enigmas of his life.

Certainly the biggest gap in the historical record concerns his youth in Montreal, 1858-66. We have only two letters to his family, written in 1864 after his father's death; the notebook of poetry published in *Poésies de jeunesse*; four

19 (Winnipeg, 1974).

20 See respectively G.F.G. Stanley, "Riel's Petition to the President of the United States, 1870," *Canadian Historical Review* 20 (December 1939): 421-28; and A.H. de Trémaudan, "Letter of Louis Riel and Ambroise Lépine to Lieutenant-Governor Morris, Jan. 3, 1873," *ibid.* 7 (March 1926): 137-60.

21 *La Minerve*, 85/5/23.

22 AASB, Fonds Taché, T53007-08, 53017.

lettres en vers (three to George Cartier) printed in the same volume; and four letters to Sophie Masson. Yet Riel must have written many letters to Red River in these years, to his family and also to Bishop Taché, his sponsor.²³ He may also have written to his Montreal fiancée, Marie Julie Guernon, and to the families, like the Massons, whose patronage he enjoyed in Quebec. The discovery of documents from this period of Riel's life would be especially desirable to help clarify whether he ever thought he was a Jew, David Mordecai, impersonating Louis Riel. No firm conclusion is possible without better evidence.

A second very large gap is Riel's correspondence to Fabien and Evelina Barnabé. Their letters to him have survived, but not his to them. Riel first met the Barnabé family when he went to Keeseville, New York, in early 1874. Thereafter, when he was not staying with them, he corresponded regularly. After his release from Beauport asylum, he spent the better part of 1878 with them, when he fell in love with Evelina. After his return to the West later in the year, they continued to correspond until sometime in 1879. She wrote to him one last time in 1882, to reproach him with having married another woman.²⁴ He made several drafts of a reply, but we do not know if it was ever sent. Discovery of Riel's letters, if they still exist, would enlighten us about the years 1874-79 in his life, when, except for the period in the asylum, he was almost constantly on the move and engaged in obscure projects of which little is known today. Our knowledge would also be bolstered if we could find Riel's letters to his other American friends, like his confessor, Father J.B. Primeau of Worcester, Massachusetts. Primeau, incidentally, would appear to have received custody of a substantial cache of Riel's papers. In his diary of October 1885, after making some comments about St. Paul, Riel wrote:

Si vous voulez avoir d'autres particularités au sujet des révélations qui m'ont été faites touchant l'apôtre des nations, allez demander au Révérend Messire J.B. Primeau. Il est celui qui j'ai mis en possession d'une bonne partie de mes écrits. J'y ai fait mention de St. Paul.²⁵

Primeau held Riel under virtual house arrest in December 1875, not long before he was committed to the asylum. The two reestablished contact in 1878 after Riel's release. It is not known on which occasion the papers were left in Worcester. They would be interesting to have, though what has survived in ACAM and ASQ gives a fairly broad picture of Riel's new religion.

Also of interest would be the missing letters to Ignace Bourget mentioned above in the discussion of ACAM. Riel's letters in that collection terminate 29 May 1876, but there were certainly others, written probably over several years. Riel made several drafts of a letter to Bourget around 26 February 1884, defending his belief in his divine mission. The letters make sense only if Bourget had previously written to Riel denying his mission. A notebook entry of 1 June 1884, contains this provocative statement:

²³ Such youthful letters are mentioned in Louis Riel (*père*) to A.A. Taché, 2 Jan. 1862, AASB.

²⁴ Evelina Barnabé to Louis Riel, 82/10/16, PAC, RG 13 B 2, 297-99.

²⁵ PAM, MG 3 D 1, No. 525, 62-63.

L'archevêque Ignace Bourget est un grand saint. . . . Cependant il a fait comme Saint Pierre; après m'avoir dit et écrit "Dieu. . . vous a donné une mission. . .," il a renié en m'écrivant quelques années plus tard qu'il n'avait jamais cru et qu'il ne croyait pas encore à la mission que j'étais persuadé d'avoir reçue du ciel.²⁶

Riel wrote assiduously in Montana, though it is mostly rough drafts in fragmentary condition that have survived. It seems that he left a sizeable number of manuscripts at St. Peter's Mission when he came to Canada in June 1884. More than fifty years later, a resident recalled that in the 1890s he had found in the Mission library two bundles of Riel's papers. One consisted of correspondence in French and English. The other, written in English, was "evidently the draft of a speech to be delivered before the Canadian Parliament. It was a respectful, humble petition for the protection of life, home and property of the Red River Settlement of Half Breeds. . . ." ²⁷ These papers have never been recovered.

The greatest prize of all would be the book or books which Riel composed in Montana. At some point he drafted a letter to his brother Joseph discussing a book which he had completed writing. He intended to bring the manuscript to St-Boniface for Mgr. Taché to read, and he would defer to Taché's wishes as to whether or not it should be published. He would also leave copies "entre bonnes mains" in Montana, to be published if any harm came to him in Manitoba. Riel added that these unnamed friends liked his book and would pay for publication.²⁸

In an undated prayer to the Virgin Mary (perhaps May 1884), Riel speaks of something he has written entitled the *Massinahican*, the Cree word for "book". Riel may have been using it for a title in the same way in which "Bible" (Greek *ta biblia*) means literally "books". An idea of the contents comes from a short text in the Riel Family Papers (PAM), which is headed "Partie du Massinahican." It hints at a utopian theocracy in which all the nations and religious denominations of the New World are linked in an *entente générale* based on a system of ecumenical councils. Riel obviously had in mind a dramatic break with Rome, for he wrote in the prayer to Mary in which the *Massinahican* is mentioned:

Daignez obtenir de Jésus Christ qu'il lui plaise de jeter [sic] dans le coeur de Monseigneur Brondel, de Monseigneur Taché, de tout l'épiscopat canadien-français, de toute la cour Romaine, de toute la cour d'Angleterre, au moyen du Massinahican; la peur, la crainte, et l'épouvante.²⁹

Is this the same book as the one Riel mentioned to his brother? It seems unlikely, for Riel wanted to show the first book to Taché to obtain his *imprimatur*, while the second is supposed to strike Taché with fear and trembling. It is also not apparent whether the book(s) mentioned here is (are) related to the numbered paragraphs in the Department of Justice papers (PAC, RG 13 B 2), which seem to be drafts of a book.

26 PAC, RG 13 B 2, 2070-71.

27 Gilles Martel, *Le Messianisme de Louis Riel*, 652.

28 PAC, RG 13 B 2, 137-38.

29 *Ibid.*, 2152-53.

Further complicating matters is the testimony of Charles Nolin. After the Rebellion of 1885, he claimed that Riel's plans were contained "in a book written seven years ago with buffalo blood."³⁰ Now seven years before the Rebellion Riel had been in the East, where buffalo blood was hard to find; but the general idea of a book of prophecies or revelations is plausible. On another occasion, Nolin testified that "Riel had a book which he read or pretended to read from to convince the people of the holy character of his mission."³¹ Called the *Prophecies of St. Bridget*, it contained predictions about apocalyptic events and the coming of a new saviour. It is not clear from Nolin's testimony whether this was a book composed by Riel or a published book which he had acquired. Bridget of Sweden was in fact a well known medieval oracle whose prophecies circulated together with those of Nostradamus and similar figures.

In conclusion, we might mention a few lacunae in Riel's life that will probably never be filled with evidence from his own pen, because he seems to have written little or nothing at certain times. After the collapse of his marriage plans in June 1866, Riel left Montreal to live in the western United States. Then ensued a long period when he did not write home, perhaps out of embarrassment. Another poorly documented period in his life is the Rebellion of 1869-70. Although the events are well known from other sources, Riel wrote rather little in these months. He later composed retrospective memoirs on the Rebellion, but these were inevitably coloured by hindsight. He also lapsed into silence for about two years after the summer of 1880, not writing to his family in Red River until after the birth of his son, 9 May 1882. The reasons for the long silence are not clear.

The most regrettable gap in Riel's papers is in the months immediately prior to the North-West Rebellion. From 16 December 1884, when a petition to Ottawa was sent,³² until 19 March 1885, when the Provisional Government was formed, the only significant text we have is a pocket notebook of prayers. There is nothing in Riel's own hand bearing on his attempts to get money from the government for himself or on his decision to transform a peaceful political movement into an armed insurrection. Riel afterwards tried to explain these things, but the explanations were manifestly part of his legal defense strategy and hence not wholly plausible. Unless unexpected evidence suddenly turns up, we may never know precisely what impelled Riel to provoke the Rebellion.

About the Appendices

Appendix A lists all of the repositories which house Riel materials, cites the particular collections in which these papers are housed, and gives brief descriptions of the holdings. The "Time Frame" column designates the specific periods of Riel's life in which the documents were written. It is included in order to assist the researcher in selecting the collections that are likely to shed light on

30 PAA, 71.220 (Oblate papers), D-IV-116, Rapport de M. Cloutier.

31 *Canada Sessional Papers* (1886), no. 52, 393.

32 L.H. Thomas (ed.), "Louis Riel's Petition of Rights, 1884," *Saskatchewan History* 23 (Winter 1970): 16-26.

the aspect of Riel he intends to examine. For this purpose, Riel's life has been divided into six periods:

1. 23 October, 1844 to 26 July, 1868—Birth, to his return to Red River following his studies at the Collège de Montréal
2. 27 July, 1868 to 7 December, 1875—Return to Red River until his religious experience in Washington, D.C.
3. 8 December, 1875 to 23 January, 1878—Period of religious exaltation
4. 24 January, 1878 to 4 June, 1884—Period of residence in the U.S.
5. 5 June, 1884 to 15 May, 1885—Departure from Montana until surrender at Batoche
6. 16 May, 1885 to 16 November, 1885—Prisoner of the Canadian Government

Appendix B lists writings by Riel whose originals are lost but which are known in printed form. The attentive reader will note a certain amount of duplication in the appendix. Sometimes a particular item was printed simultaneously in two or more different newspapers. In such cases, it is almost impossible to determine the authoritative printed version, and we have adopted the policy of listing all items. Otherwise, only the newspaper which first carried the item is mentioned, based on the assumption that later publications are simply reprints of the first. A more complicated situation arises when a particular document was printed in two newspapers on different days, but where it can be established that the newspapers involved acquired the contents of the document from different but more or less equally reliable sources. Here, too, both are listed. An extension of the above, which applies to all publications, occurs when what seems superficially to be the same document is found to be printed with important differences in content. In this case, the documents are considered variants of one another, and are listed separately.

Appendix B does not list proclamations issued in broadside form by the Provisional Government of 1869-70 at Fort Garry. These are very complex, and would require more explanation than is possible within the confines of this paper.

APPENDIX A

Manuscripts

Abbreviation	Archive	Name of Collection	Accession Number/Code	Time Frame	Description
AAQ	Archives de l'Archidiocèse de Québec	Diocèse de Saint-Boniface 1: 12a	331 CN	2	Letter to E.A. Taschereau, Archbishop of Quebec, seeking his political support
AASB	Archives de l'Archevêché de Saint-Boniface	Fonds Taché	—	2,3,4, 5,6	(see main text)

Abbreviation	Archive	Name of Collection	Accession Number/ Code	Time Frame	Description
AASB	Archives de l'Archevêché de Saint-Boniface	Fonds Taché (Textes dactylographiés)	—	3,4,6	(see main text)
ABCL	Archives de la Bibliothèque, Collège de Lévis	Les manuscrits des ABCL	Riel — M.1 Lévis classier E, loc. 104	6	Part of a text rewriting the prayers of the Way of the Cross. Other parts of this text are in PAC, MG 27 1 C 4.
ACAE	Archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton	Correspondence of Vital Grandin	—	5,6	Three letters to Vital Grandin, Bishop of St-Albert; a copy of a letter from Grandin to Riel; and a list of rights demanded of the Canadian government in September, 1884.
ACAM	Archives de la Chancellerie de l'Archevêché de Montréal	Dossier Louis Riel, 1874-1876	588.201	2,3	(see main text)
ACJCF	Archives de la Compagnie de Jésus, Province du Canada français (Saint-Jérôme)	Fonds Alphonse Desjardins	5254-4 5254-5	2	Two letters to Alphonse Desjardins, Member of Parliament.
AD	Archives Deschâtelets (Ottawa)	Microfilms des AASB	W206.M62F	2,3, 4,5,6	Microfilms of many documents at the AASB. These archives contain four documents, all letters to A.A. Taché, Archbishop of St. Boniface, which seem to have disappeared from AASB files.
AESH	Archives de l'Evêché de Saint-Hyacinthe		III. E.5	2	One letter to Charles Larocque, Bishop of St-Hyacinthe.
ANQ	Archives Nationales du Québec	Collection Chapais, Papiers Riel	—	1,2,3	Two <i>lettres en vers</i> to G.E. Cartier; one letter to Rodrigue Masson, M.P.; one letter on the amnesty question; a draft of a reply to Dr. Lynch, a member of the Orange Order; and a letter to Clément Vincelette, manager of the asylum at Beauport.

Abbreviation	Archive	Name of Collection	Accession Number/ Code	Time Frame	Description
ANQ	Archives Nationales du Québec	Petites Collections	—	5	A prayer of consecration of the Métis, as well as a fragment of a memoir on the 1870 events in Manitoba.
ANQ	Archives Nationales du Québec	F.-X. Lemieux, Affaire Riel	—	3,6	Typescripts of two letters to persons unknown, three poems, and one prophecy written in prison in Regina. Probably copied from the contemporary press.
ANQM	Archives nationales du Québec, Centre régional de Montréal	Minutier du notaire A.C. Décaré	#44	1	Marriage contract, signed by Riel and Marie Julie Guernon.
ASHSB	Archives, Société historique de Saint-Boniface	Papiers Riel	—	3,4,6	Two manuscript letters and two typescripts of a third letter, all to one of his sisters, Henriette Poitras; one letter to Clément Vincelette, manager of the asylum at Beauport; Riel's marriage certificate; one poem; and several notes, mostly of a religious nature.
ASQ	Archives du Séminaire de Québec	Carton Polygraphique 38, no. 8	—	3	(see main text)
ASSH	Archives du Séminaire de Saint-Hyacinthe	Fonds du chanoine Godfroy Lamarche, 1831-88	Fg 10 dos. 21,4	2	Letter to Ignace Bourget, Bishop of Montreal
ASSSM	Archives du Séminaire St-Sulpice de Montréal	—	—	2,6	Typescript of pamphlet on the amnesty question; a letter to E.P. Lachapelle, M.D.; and an item of a religious nature.
ASTR	Archives du Séminaire de Trois-Rivières	Papiers de M.B. de la Bruère	D-3	3,6	Two letters to A.-A. Taché, Archbishop of St-Boniface.
AUM	Université de Montréal, Services des Archives	La Collection Baby	P-58	2	One letter to Judge Coursol, president of the St-Jean-Baptiste Society; and two to Alphonse Desjardins, M.P.

Abbreviation	Archive	Name of Collection	Accession Number/ Code	Time Frame	Description
CFLUND	Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota (Grand Forks)	Winfred V. Working Papers	—	2	Two letters to William Dease, a Métis of St-François-Xavier.
DAMMHS	Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Minnesota Historical Society (St. Paul)	Reserve Collection	—	2	One letter to Robert Tait, miller at Red River.
DAMMHS	Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Minnesota Historical Society (St. Paul)	James Wickes Taylor Papers	—	4,5	Three letters to J.W. Taylor, U.S. Consul at Winnipeg; and a draft of the petition of grievances submitted to the Canadian government, December 16, 1884.
DLHM	Duck Lake Historical Museum	—	—	5	One letter to English Half-Breeds, requesting their support in the North-West Rebellion.
GAI	Glenbow-Alberta Institute (Calgary)	Dr. Augustus Jukes Papers	A/.J93B	6	Five brief revelations and prophecies, three of them in the hand of Dr. Jukes, physician at the Regina prison.
GAI	Glenbow-Alberta Institute (Calgary)	Mrs. Phoebe Toole Papers	5461	6	One revelation explaining the nature of Riel's "mission".
GAI	Glenbow-Alberta Institute (Calgary)	W.F.C. Parsons Papers	CC/.R555	6	One autograph note, given to Cpl. William Townsend of the NWMP, as Riel walked to the scaffold.
GAI	Glenbow-Alberta Institute (Calgary)	J.G. MacEwan Papers	CB/M142	2	A pass for Peter Laurie, printer at Red River.
GAI	Glenbow-Alberta Institute (Calgary)	Rupert L. Taylor, Collector	BB.12/.H886P	2	A letter to "Fellow Countrymen"
GAI	Glenbow-Alberta Institute (Calgary)	O.B. Buell Photograph Album	PD-163-1	6	A note about Charles Nolin
GM	Galt Museum (Lethbridge)	—	GM 977.178	6	Letter to F. Russell, a photographer interested in taking Riel's portrait.

Abbreviation	Archive	Name of Collection	Accession Number/ Code	Time Frame	Description
HBCA, PAM	Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba (Winnipeg)	Red River Rebellion, (1869-70) — Miscellaneous Papers	E.9/1 fos. 1, 2	2	One letter to William Mactavish, Governor of Assiniboia, setting forth terms on which the Hudson's Bay Company might resume its commercial operations.
HILUNB	Harriet Irving Library, University of New Brunswick (Fredericton)	Beaverbrook Collection; Louis Riel Papers	—	1,4,6	One letter to his wife; one <i>lettre en vers</i> to Charles Lenoir-Roland, director of the Petit Séminaire de Montréal; one letter to Prime Minister John A. Macdonald; four prose items of a religious nature; and one poem.
MMA	McCord Museum, Archives (Montreal)	Riel Papers	M20190	1,5,6	One <i>lettre en vers</i> to G.E. Cartier; one letter asking English Half-Breeds to separate from Rome; one letter to A.G. Irvine, Commissioner of the NWMP; and one document outlining his wishes for the disposal of his remains and the publication of his papers.
MG	Musée Girouxville	—	—	4	Letter to Mr. & Mrs. John Lee, relatives of Riel's in Montreal.
NARS	National Archives and Records Services (Washington, D.C.)	Records of the Office of the Adjutant General	6007 A G O 1880	4	A letter to N.A. Miles, U.S. Brt. Major-General; and a petition asking for a Métis reservation in Montana.
NARS	National Archives and Records Services	Despatches from the U.S. Consuls in Winnipeg, 1869-1906	General Records of the Department of State (Record Group 59)	2,6	One letter to William Mactavish, Governor of Assiniboia; two letters to J.W. Taylor, U.S. Consul; and a petition to President Grover Cleveland of the U.S., asking him to annex western Canada.
PAA	Provincial Archives of Alberta (Edmonton)	Oblate Papers, Riel Rebellion Series	71.220 Folder D IV	5	A letter to Valentin Végréville, O.M.I. demanding his neutrality during the Rebellion.

Abbreviation	Archive	Name of Collection	Accession Number/Code	Time Frame	Description
PAA	Provincial Archives of Alberta	H.W. MacEwing Papers	67.68	2	Two letters to residents of Red River.
PAA	Provincial Archives of Alberta	Pierre Richard Gauvreau Papers	66.135	2	A pass for Peter Laurie, printer at Red River.
PAA	Provincial Archives of Alberta	Ernest Brown Photograph Collection	—	2,6	A pass for Peter Laurie, printer at Red River, and two items of a religious nature.
PABC	Provincial Archives of British Columbia (Victoria)	Louis David Riel, 1844-85 Correspondence Outward 1871-85	EC R44	6	Typescript of a letter to J.W. Taylor, U.S. Consul in Winnipeg.
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	John A. Macdonald Papers	MG 26 A	5,6	(see main text)
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	Edgar Dewdney Papers	MG 27 I C 4 6		(see main text)
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	George Etienne Cartier Papers	MG 27 I D 4 2		Telegram to George Etienne Cartier, informing him of his election by acclamation in the riding of Provencher, signed by Riel and others.
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	Louis "David" Riel Papers	MG 27 I F 3	1,2,3, 4,5,6	(see main text)
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	F.-X. Valade Papers	MG 27 I J 8 6		Two prophecies shown to Dr. Valade when he visited Riel as part of the medical commission of November, 1885.
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	Secretary of State for Provinces	RG 6 C 1	2	Letter to William McDougall, Lieutenant-Governor of Rupert's Land, ordering him not to enter the North-West without the permission of <i>Le Comité National des Métis</i> . Signed by Riel and John Bruce.

Abbreviation	Archive	Name of Collection	Accession Number/Code	Time Frame	Description
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	Department of Justice	RG 13 A 4	6	Typescript made from stenographic record of Riel's trial, including his two major speeches.
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	Department of Justice	RG 13 B 2	3,4,5,6	(see main text)
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	Department of Interior	RG 15	5	Petition to the Government of Canada, submitted December 16, 1884.
PAC/APC	Public Archives of Canada/Archives publiques du Canada	Library of the Public Archives	R/BS/1965/.G8	6	"Words on different subjects," written in the Greek New Testament of C.B. Pitblado, Chaplain of the Canadian expeditionary force.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba (Winnipeg)	Alexander Ross Family Papers	MG 2 C 14	2	Three letters to James Ross, resident at Red River; and one letter to the guard at the Bishop's Palace.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Red River Disturbance	MG 3 A 1	2	A copy of a list of rights, not in Riel's hand; a note regarding the Hudson's Bay Company stores; and a typescript of a memorial and petition sent to U.S. Grant, President of the U.S.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Thomas Bunn Papers	MG 3 B 1	2	A letter to Rev. J.N. Ritchot of St-Norbert, signed by Thomas Bunn, but including a salutation in Riel's hand, and hand copies of the English version and the French version of a list of rights, not in Riel's hand.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Papiers de J.N. Ritchot	MG 3 B 14-1	2,3,4	Four letters to J.N. Ritchot, parish priest at St-Norbert.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Peter G. Laurie Papers	MG 3 B 16-2	2	Pass for Peter Laurie, printer at Red River.

Abbreviation	Archive	Name of Collection	Accession Number/ Code	Time Frame	Description
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	George A. Flinn Papers	MG 3 C 13	6	A letter to J.W. Taylor, U.S. Consul at Winnipeg.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Louis Riel Collection	MG 3 D 1	1,2,3, 4,5,6	(see main text)
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Riel Family Papers	MG 3 D 2	1,2,3, 4,5,6	(see main text)
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Louis Riel Papers	MG 3 D 4	4	One letter to his brother, Joseph Riel.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	John Black Papers	MG 7 C 12	2	A letter to the English-speaking community at Red River, pleading for the maintenance of public order.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Church — Roman Catholic-St-Lazare	MG 7 D 4	4,6	Hand copies of Riel's will and of some of the poems in <i>Poésies religieuses et politiques</i> .
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Belleau Collection, Assumption Abbey Archives	MG-7 D 13	2	Typescripts of two letters to William Dease, resident at St-François-Xavier, and of a letter to A.-A. Taché, Archbishop of St-Boniface.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba	Joseph Dubuc Papers	MG 14 B 26	2,3,6	Two letters to Joseph Dubuc; one letter to J.B.Z. Bolduc, Chaplain of Beauport; two letters to A.-A. Taché, Archbishop of St-Boniface; one letter to his cousin, Paul Proulx; and the score and lyrics for a song.
PC	Parks Canada (Ottawa)	—	—	2,4	Manuscript of the pamphlet <i>L'Amnistie</i> ; one poem; and one letter to his brother, Joseph Riel.
QUA	Queen's University Archives (Kingston)	G.H. Young Papers	Collection 63	6	Entry in G.H. Young's diary, explaining the meaning of the word "Exovedate".

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Abbreviation	Archive	Name of Collection	Accession Number/ Code	Time Frame	Description
RCMPM	Royal Canadian Mounted Police Museum (Regina)	—	—	6	Two items of a religious nature, and an autograph note addressed to "Mr. Le Quesne."
SABR	Saskatchewan Archives Board (Regina)	Riel Documents and Artifacts	R-86	2,5	One incomplete poem; a draft of a letter accepting the invitation to come to the Saskatchewan District; two letters to Alphonse Desjardins, M.P.; an oath for the guards at Batoche; and a notebook of poems, some of which may have been composed by Riel.
SABR	Saskatchewan Archives Board	Saskatchewan Historical Society Files	SHS-56	1,5,6	A letter to his family, one to Joseph Riel and Louis Lavallée, and one to his mother.
SHSND	State Historical Society of North Dakota (Bismark, N.D.)	Albert E. Dease Papers	—	2	One letter to William Dease, a resident at St-François-Xavier.
TUA	Trent University Archives (Peterborough)	—	B-77-1007	6	English translation of a letter to Romuald Fiset, M.P., the original of which is now in private hands.
USJB-BM	Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste — Bibliothèque Mallet (Woonsocket)	Collection Mallet	CM	2,3?	Four letters to Edmond Mallet, a Franco-American sympathizer of Riel's.
USL	University of Saskatchewan Libraries (Saskatoon)	A.S. Morton Manuscript Collection	—	5,6	Two religious items; four letters to the Jackson family; two open letters to the residents of Prince Albert; and a typescript of some notes for an address to the Minister of Public Works.

APPENDIX B
Printed Sources

Reference	Description	Time Frame
Books: / Begg, A., <i>The Creation of Manitoba</i> , Toronto: A.H. Hovey, 1871.	A letter to Dr. John Schultz and several other members of the "Canadian Party"; a letter to an unknown person requesting him to stop serving liquor; and Riel's oath in assuming office as President of the Provisional Government.	2
<i>The Gibbet of Regina. The truth about Riel — Sir John A. Macdonald and his cabinet before public opinion, by one who knows</i> , New York: Thompson & Moreau, 1886.	English translation of a memoir on the North-West question.	6
<i>Le gibet de Régina; la vérité sur Riel; Sir John A. Macdonald et le cabinet d'Ottawa devant l'opinion publique; par un homme bien renseigné</i> . New York: Thompson et Moreau, 1886.	A memoir on the North-West question, presented in its original language.	6
Fowke, E., and Johnston, R., <i>More Folk Songs of Canada</i> , Waterloo: Waterloo Music Co., 1967.	Two songs attributed to Riel; the authenticity of one is somewhat doubtful.	4,6
Macbeth, R.G., <i>The Romance of Western Canada</i> , Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1920, (second edition).	A facsimile of a letter to Judge Hugh Richardson, who presided over Riel's trial, thanking him for the postponement of his execution.	6
Morton, W.L., ed., <i>Alexander Begg's Red River Journal and Other Papers Relative to the Red River Resistance of 1869-70</i> , Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1956.	A letter to Onésime Monchamps, resident of Red River.	2
Riel, Louis "David," <i>Poésies religieuses et politiques</i> , Montréal: L'imprimerie de l'Étendard, 1886.	Nine poems published posthumously by Riel's family.	4
Government Documents: <i>Canada Sessional Papers</i> , (1870), Vol. 5, No. 12, Correspondence and Papers connected with Recent Occurrences in the North-West Territories.	Letter to William McDougall, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West, refusing him entry into Red River; and what seems to be a preliminary version of the first list of rights.	2

Reference	Description	Time Frame
<i>Queen v. Louis Riel</i> , Trial Exhibits	One letter to L.N. Crozier, N.W.M.P. Superintendent at Fort Carlton; and four letters to Métis and Indian groups in neighbouring areas of the North-West, requesting their support.	5
<i>Canada Sessional Papers</i> (1886), no. 52, <i>Queen v. William Henry Jackson</i> .	One letter to Half-Breeds in the North-West, requesting their support.	5
<i>Journals of the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada</i> , (1874), Vol. VIII, Report of the Select Committee on the Causes of the Difficulties in the North-West Territory in 1869-70, Appendix (No. 6).	English translations of letters to A.-A. Taché, Archbishop of St-Boniface; A.G. Archibald, Lt. Governor of Manitoba; and A. Morris, Lt. Governor of Manitoba.	2
<i>Journaux, Chambres des Communes, Canada</i> . Vol. VIII, (1874), Appendice (No. 6). Rapport du Comité spécial sur les causes des troubles du Nord-Ouest en 1869-70.	The original French version of letters to A.-A. Taché, Archbishop of St-Boniface, and to A.G. Archibald, Lt. Governor of Manitoba; and a translation into French of an English translation of a letter to A.G. Morris, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba.	2
Journals: <i>Le Bulletin de recherches historiques</i> , Vol. 69, no. 4, Oct. 1967.	A letter to Riel's wife, Marguerite.	6
<i>Canadian Historical Review</i> , (a) Vol. VI, (Sept. 1925), and (b) Vol. XX, (Dec. 1939).	(a) A memoir on the execution of Thomas Scott, and (b) a petition to U.S. President Ulysses Grant.	(a) 2 (b) 2
<i>L'Enseignement secondaire</i> , (March, 1931).	A letter to Ignace Bourget, Bishop of Montreal, describing some of his religious revelations.	3
<i>Montreal Book Auctions Catalogue</i> (a) Sale #27, (Oct. 1971), and (b) (June, 1978).	(a) Partial photocopy of a letter to Riel's wife, Marguerite, and (b) a typescript of of another letter to Marguerite.	(a)-(b)-6
Newspapers: <i>Le Canadien</i> , Québec 85/12/26	Memoir on the causes of the political difficulties in the North-West	6
<i>Le Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe</i> , (a) 69/10/30 (b) 73/10/07	(a) A letter to the editor, signed by "Deux habitants métis-canadiens de la Rivière-Rouge." Could these be Riel and Louis Schmidt? (b) and a letter to the editor, signed by Riel.	(a)-(b)-2

Reference	Description	Time Frame
<p><i>Le Courrier du Canada</i>, Québec (a) 85/06/05 (b) 85/06/08 (c) 85/08/04 (d) 85/08/07</p>	<p>(a) Three poems, all of which were published in a more complete form in Louis Riel, <i>Poésies religieuses et politiques</i>; (b) two letters to an unidentified person, and three poems contained in an article seeking to prove Riel's insanity; (c) one poem dedicated to Rev. Georges Dugas, an oblate priest in St-Boniface, and (d) a copy, in Riel's hand, of a letter sent him by Ignace Bourget, Bishop of Montreal, with some notes on the text by Riel.</p>	<p>(a) 4 (b) 3 (c) 6 (d) 3</p>
<p><i>The Daily Manitoban</i>, Winnipeg (a) 85/10/27 (b) 85/11/09 (c) 85/11/04</p>	<p>(a) A prophetic statement; (b) a poem in English; and (c) an item of a religious nature, translated from the French.</p>	<p>(a)-(c)-6</p>
<p><i>Le Droit</i>, Ottawa 1943/02/10</p>	<p>Excerpts of a letter to Riel's mother, Julie</p>	<p>6</p>
<p><i>L'Echo du Manitoba</i>, Saint-Boniface 98/11/10</p>	<p>A poem reviewing certain parts of Métis history with a facsimile of Riel's signature.</p>	<p>?</p>
<p><i>L'Electeur</i>, Québec (a) 85/06/30; (b) 85/07/30; (c) 85/08/17; (d) 85/10/24; (e) 85/11/17.</p>	<p>(a) A letter to Romuald Fiset, M.P.; (b) a letter to the committee for the defense of the Métis; (c) several political prophecies of doubtful authenticity; (d) an inauthentic petition to the government of Canada; and (e) a letter to F.-X. Lemieux, one of Riel's lawyers.</p>	<p>(a)-(e)-6</p>
<p><i>L'Etendard</i>, Montréal (a) 85/05/04 and (b) 85/08/21</p>	<p>(a) A poem and (b) a letter to an unidentified Franco-American priest.</p>	<p>(a) 1 (b) 3</p>
<p><i>Fort Benton River Press</i>, Fort Benton, Montana, 82/10/25</p>	<p>An open letter to Martin Maginnis, a Democratic Congressman from Montana, stating his views on some local political issues.</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>The Toronto <i>Globe</i> (a) 85/03/26; (b) 85/08/06; (c) 85/08/18; (d) 85/11/04; (e) 85/11/17.</p>	<p>(a) One of the 1869-70 lists of rights; (b) a letter to Charles Nolin and Maxime Lépine, with a pencil note not given anywhere else; (c) several political prophecies of doubtful authenticity; (d) a poem; and (e) a partial version of Riel's autobiography.</p>	<p>(a) - 2 (b) - 5 (c) - 6 (d) - 6 (e) - 6</p>

Reference	Description	Time Frame
<i>The Helena Weekly Herald</i> , Helena, Montana (a) 82/12/21, and (b) 83/04/26.	Two letters to the editor of the newspaper, the former defending his political record, and the latter discussing issues related to the Half-Breed population in Montana.	(a) - (b) - 4
<i>The Irish World</i> , New York 85/11/21	An open letter "To the citizens of the United States of America," and a facsimile of a letter to "P. Ford" both of doubtful authenticity.	5
<i>La Justice</i> , Québec (a) 86/02/20 and (b) 86/02/22	(a) A poem dedicated to one of Riel's sisters, Henriette, and (b) several prophecies written in prison in Regina.	(a) - 4 (b) - 6
<i>The Leader</i> , Regina 85/09/10	A version of an open letter to be read at a public meeting held at St-Boniface.	6
<i>The Manitoba Daily Free Press</i> , Winnipeg (a) 85/09/10; (b) 85/11/18	(a) A version of an open letter to be read at a public meeting held at St-Boniface; (b) a prayer for the fulfillment of his mission; a note on his political goals; an autograph statement; a revelation of his reprieve; a letter to Charles McWilliams, an R.C. priest who accompanied Riel to the scaffold; and a note affirming his faith in the R.C. Church.	(a) - (b) - 6
<i>Le Métis/Le Manitoba</i> , Saint-Boniface (a) 72/01/11; (b) 74/01/04, 11, 18, 25; (c) 85/06/18; (d) 85/11/26.	(a) A memoir on the political situation of the Métis; (b) a letter to the editor, responding to a letter by Dr. Lynch, a member of the Orange Order in Ontario; (c) a letter to Pierre Lavallée, clerk and treasurer of the Municipality of St-François-Xavier; and (d) a version of his will.	(a) - (b) - 2 (c) - 4 (d) - 6
<i>La Minerve</i> , Montreal (a) 85/05/23; (b) 85/05/28; (c) 85/06/01; (d) 85/06/05; (e) 85/10/03; (f) 85/11/18.	(a) One item of a religious nature; (b) one prayer found attached to a ferry near Batoche, and of which the authenticity is not established; a set of rules to be followed by Métis soldiers, signed by Gabriel Dumont but probably composed by Riel; and an item of a religious nature; (c) Riel's religious "credo," most likely taken from an interview with C.B. Pitblado of Winnipeg, and first published in the <i>Winnipeg Daily Sun</i> ; (d) excerpts from three poems published in a more complete form in Louis Riel, <i>Poésies religieuses et politiques</i> ; (e) various prayers and writings of a religious nature, and (f) a version of his will, and a note affirming his faith in the R.C. Church.	(a) - 3 (b) - 5 (c) - 6 (d) - 4 (e) - 6 (f) - 6

Reference	Description	Time Frame
<p><i>Montreal Daily Star</i> (a) 85/04/10; (b) 85/05/02; (c) 85/05/30; (d) 85/08/22; (e) 85/11/17; (f) 85/11/19; (g) 85/11/28.</p>	<p>(a) A letter of doubtful authenticity to the <i>Pioneer Press</i> of St. Paul; (b) a letter to the Editor of <i>Le Courier de Saint-Hyacinthe</i> of which the authenticity is doubtful; (c) an English version of Riel's religious "credo", likely taken from an interview with C.B. Pitblado of <i>Winnipeg</i> and first published in the <i>Winnipeg Daily Sun</i>; (d) a facsimile of a letter "to the Readers of the Star"; (e) a number of items of a religious nature, and a letter to Charles McWilliams, an R.C. priest who accompanied Riel to the scaffold; (f) excerpts of an open letter "to the citizens of the United States. . .," printed in full in <i>The Irish World</i> and of doubtful authenticity; (g) a long memoir on the political situation of the Métis in the North-West.</p>	<p>(a) - 5 (b) - 5 (c) - 6 (d) - 6 (e) - 6 (f) - 5 (g) - 6</p>
<p><i>The New Nation</i>, Winnipeg 70/03/04</p>	<p>Two "Official Orders" of the Provisional Government, signed by Louis Schmidt, "by order of the President."</p>	<p>2</p>
<p><i>Le Nouveau Monde/Le Monde</i>, Montréal (a) 69/02/03; (b) 70/05/28; (c) 74/02/04; (d) 85/11/30</p>	<p>(a) A letter to the editor, signed by "L.R.", of which the authenticity is in doubt; (b) a version of one of the 1869-70 list of rights; (c) a memoir on the amnesty question, printed in pamphlet form by <i>Le Nouveau Monde</i> under the title <i>L'Amnistie</i>; and (d) several notes of a miscellaneous nature written from the prison in Regina.</p>	<p>(a)-(c) - 2 (d) - 6</p>
<p><i>L'Opinion Publique</i>, Montréal 70/02/19</p>	<p>Two poems, one of which ("Grand Dieu, lorsque tu. . .") resembles one of Riel's <i>lettres en vers</i> to G.E. Cartier.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p><i>Toronto Daily Mail</i> 85/05/20</p>	<p>A letter to members of the "Canadian Party" at Red River asking them to keep peace in the Red River community.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p><i>La Verité</i>, Québec 85/06/13</p>	<p>A letter to Clément Vincelette, manager of the asylum at Beauport, explaining Riel's religious mission.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Pamphlets: <i>L'amnistie: Mémoire sur les causes des troubles du nord-ouest et sur les négociations qui ont amené leur règlement amiable</i>. Montréal: L'imprimerie du Nouveau-Monde, 1874</p>	<p>A detailed history of the background to the Red River insurrection, and the negotiations which followed between the Provisional Government and the Canadian Government. The printed text is not identical to the draft in PC.</p>	<p>2</p>

Résumé

Le Projet Louis Riel, sous la direction de l'Université de l'Alberta prépare une publication à la fois volumineuse et étendue de documents sur Louis Riel. Cet apport qui prend la forme d'un catalogue collectif de la documentation touchant Riel, est conçu comme un instrument de recherche provisoire destiné aux archivistes et aux chercheurs.

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