

The Federal Election of 1896 in Manitoba Revisited

BY

Roland C. Pajares

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
The University of Manitoba  
In Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg

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**THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA**  
**FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES**  
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the federal election of 1896 in Manitoba. It is prompted by the question of why, during a brief period of six months, Manitoba voters retracted their support from the anti-Remedial and anti-coercionist Liberals in the Provincial election of January 1896 to elect the pro-Remedial and coercionist federal Conservatives in the federal election of 1896. The thesis investigates the ways Manitoba candidates and parties developed their positions and priorities on campaign issues and public policy during the federal campaign. It examines candidates' reliance upon both political management and their stance on controversial election issues. The thesis will show that the Manitoba campaign was not the referendum on education that almost all historians have assumed or concluded.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There have been many individuals who have helped me in writing this M.A. Thesis. First and foremost, I am forever grateful to my supervisor, Professor Barry Ferguson. His sage wisdom, guidance, and belief in this topic have allowed me to bring these pages to completion. I owe him the deepest gratitude for sharpening the conceptual framework of this manuscript. I also thank Professors Jack Bumsted, Len Kuffert, and Richard Sigurdson for their critique and comments throughout the drafts of this project. My debts extend to Professor Paul Stevens, where our discussions have helped broaden my understanding of the structure of the Canadian political parties since Confederation.

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I must thank the Wiles family and confidants Reznor and Taz, for welcoming me into their home. I owe much thanks to my Aunt Fe, who throughout the writing and research of this project, has offered me great insights to the real reason why voters vote. To my sister, Ruby, you have reminded me that there is more to life than just history and politics. Above all, and most importantly, I thank my parents, Dan and Gerry. Your unwavering support has allowed me to make it this far in my professional career. I could not have learnt to read, write, and prove a point without you.

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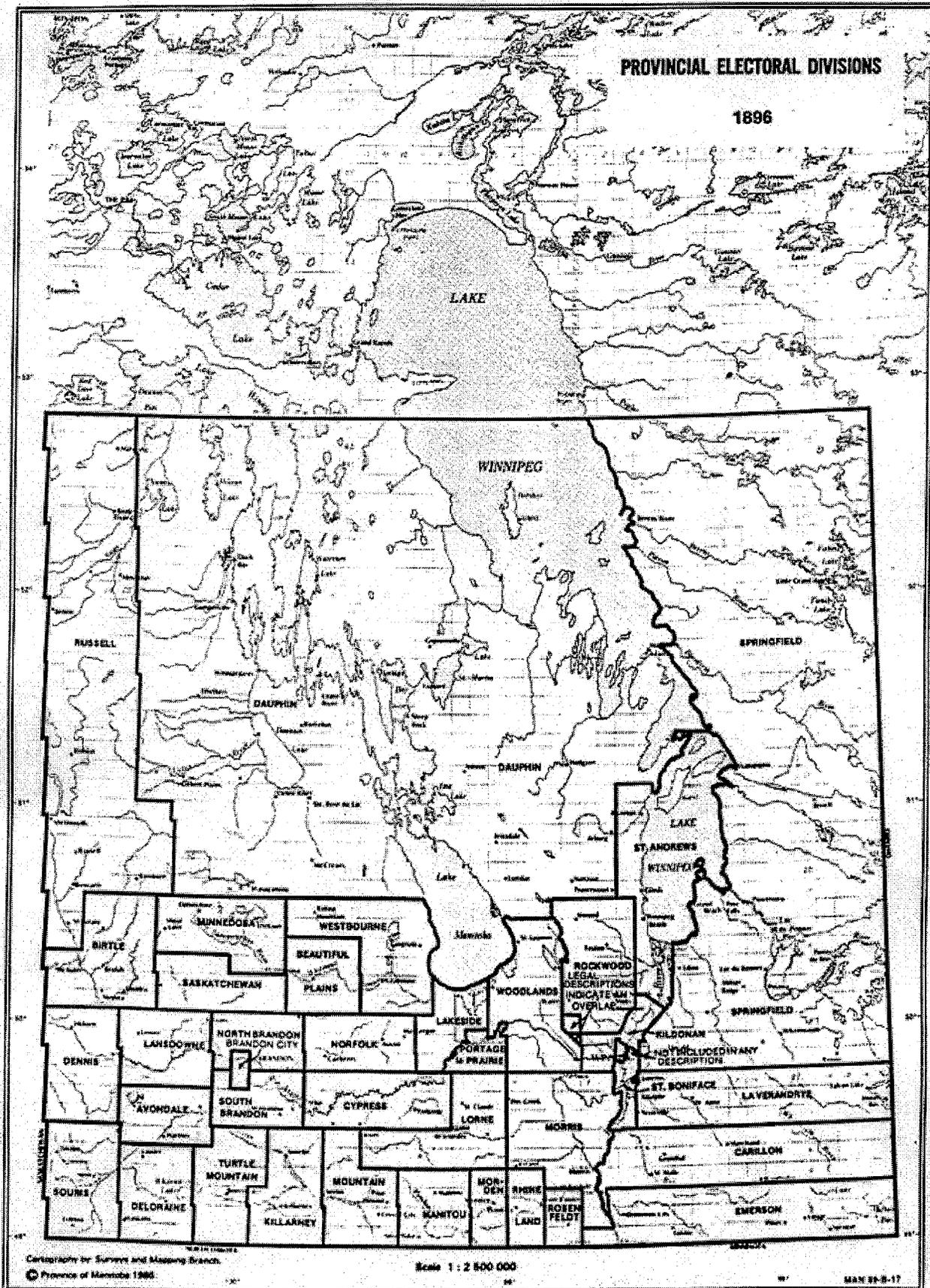
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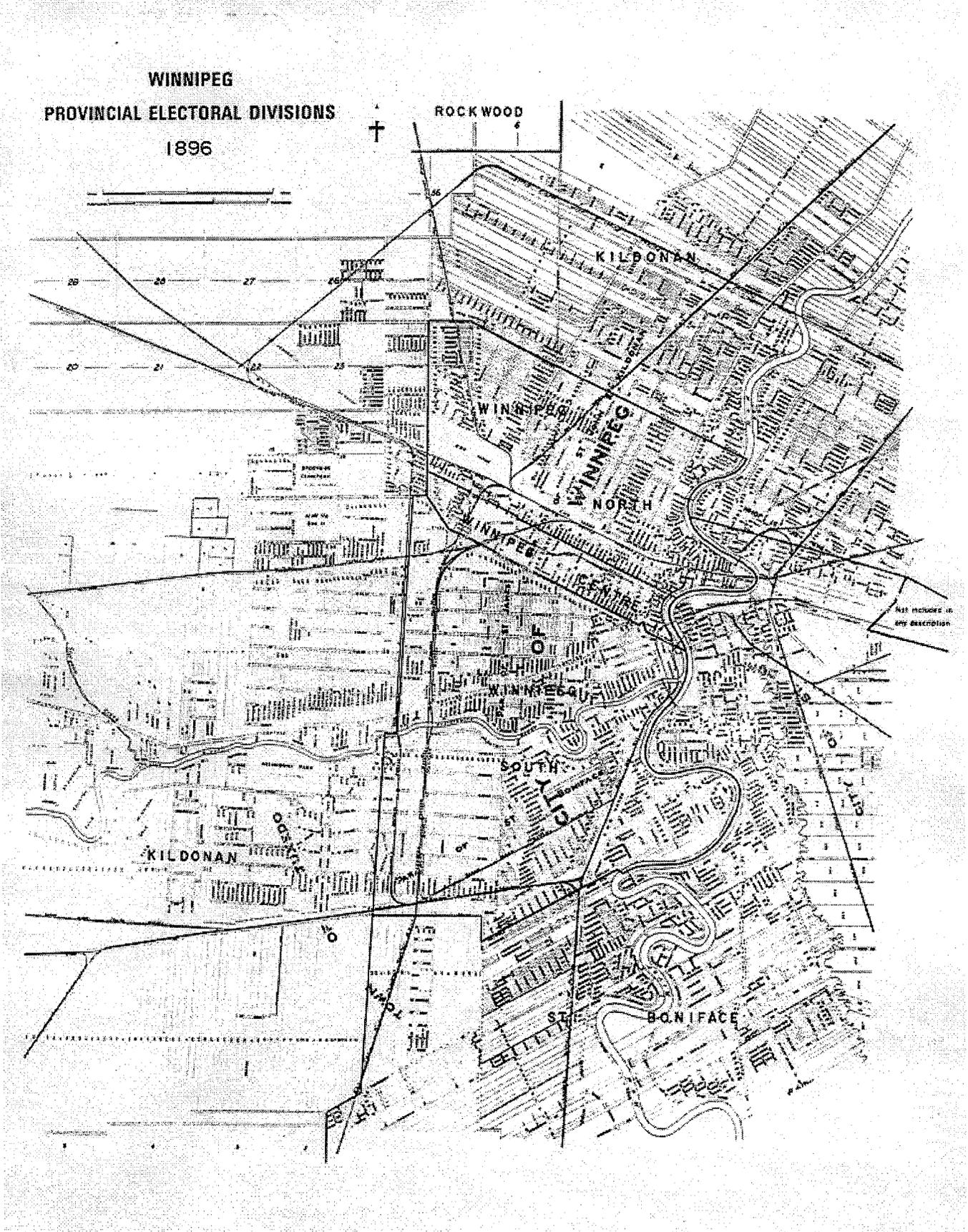
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Figure 1 – Provincial Electoral Divisions in the Provincial Election of 1896



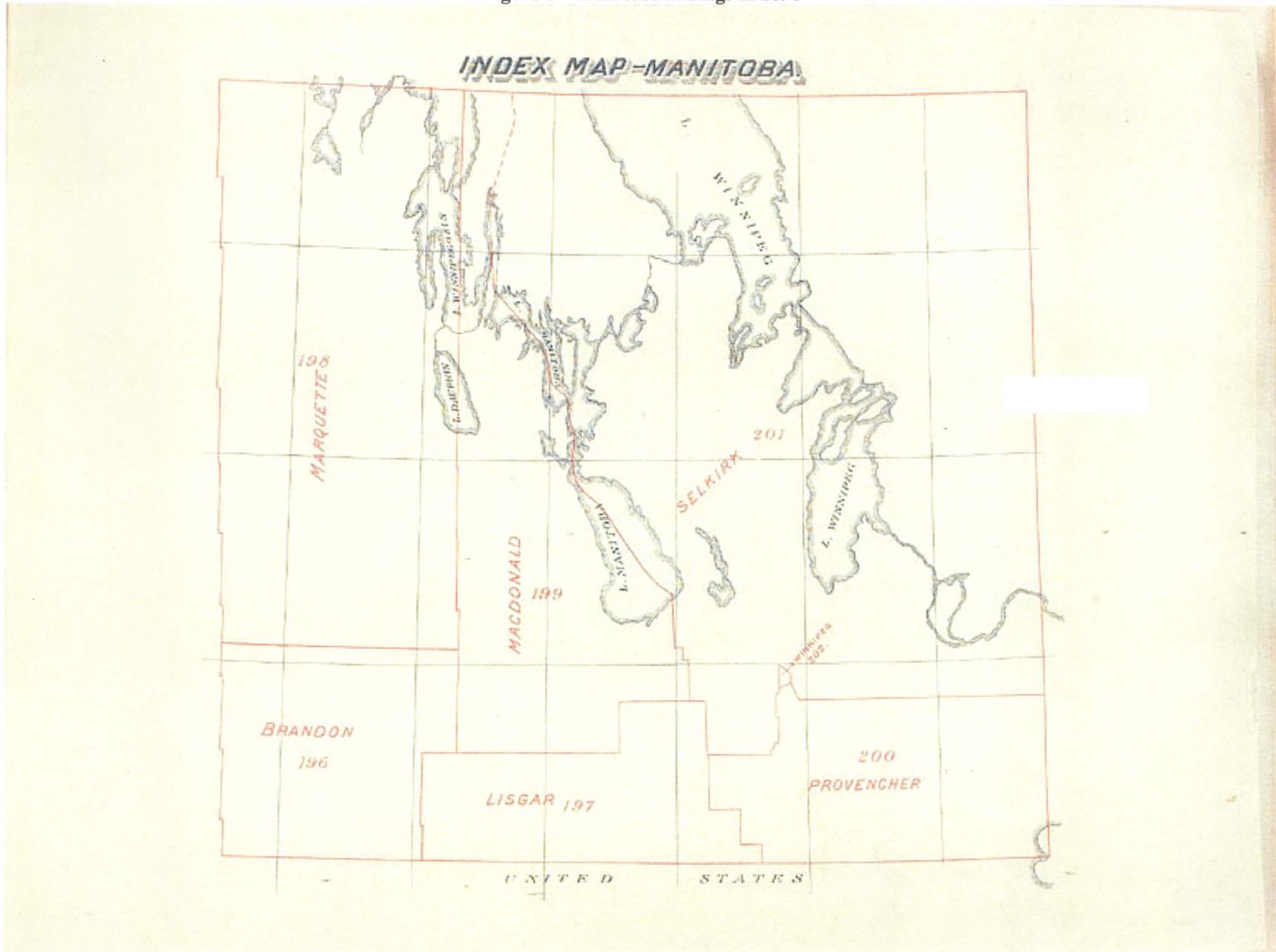
Source: Surveys and Mapping Branch, Province of Manitoba, 1986.

Figure 2 – Winnipeg Electoral Divisions in the Provincial Election of 1896



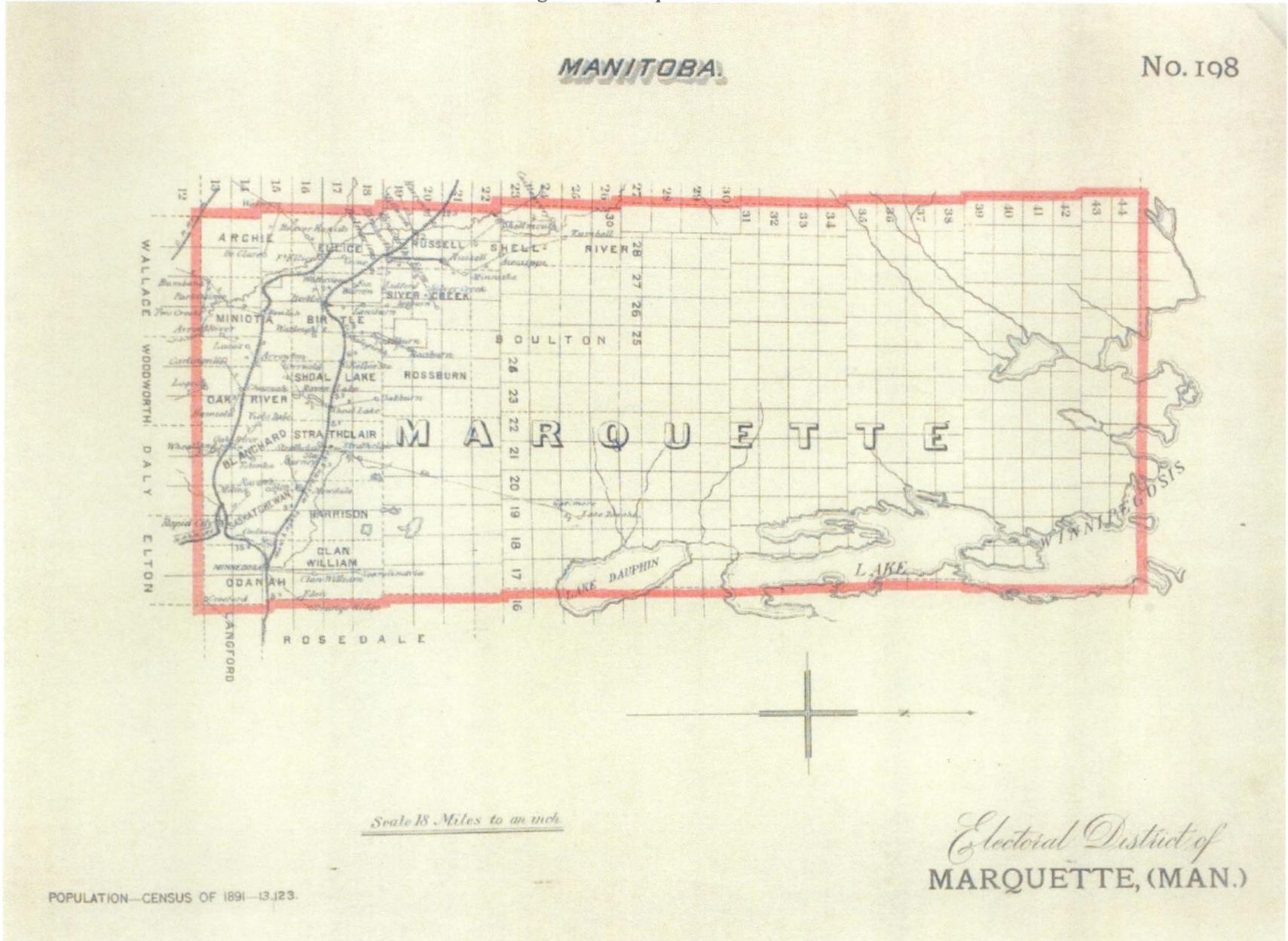
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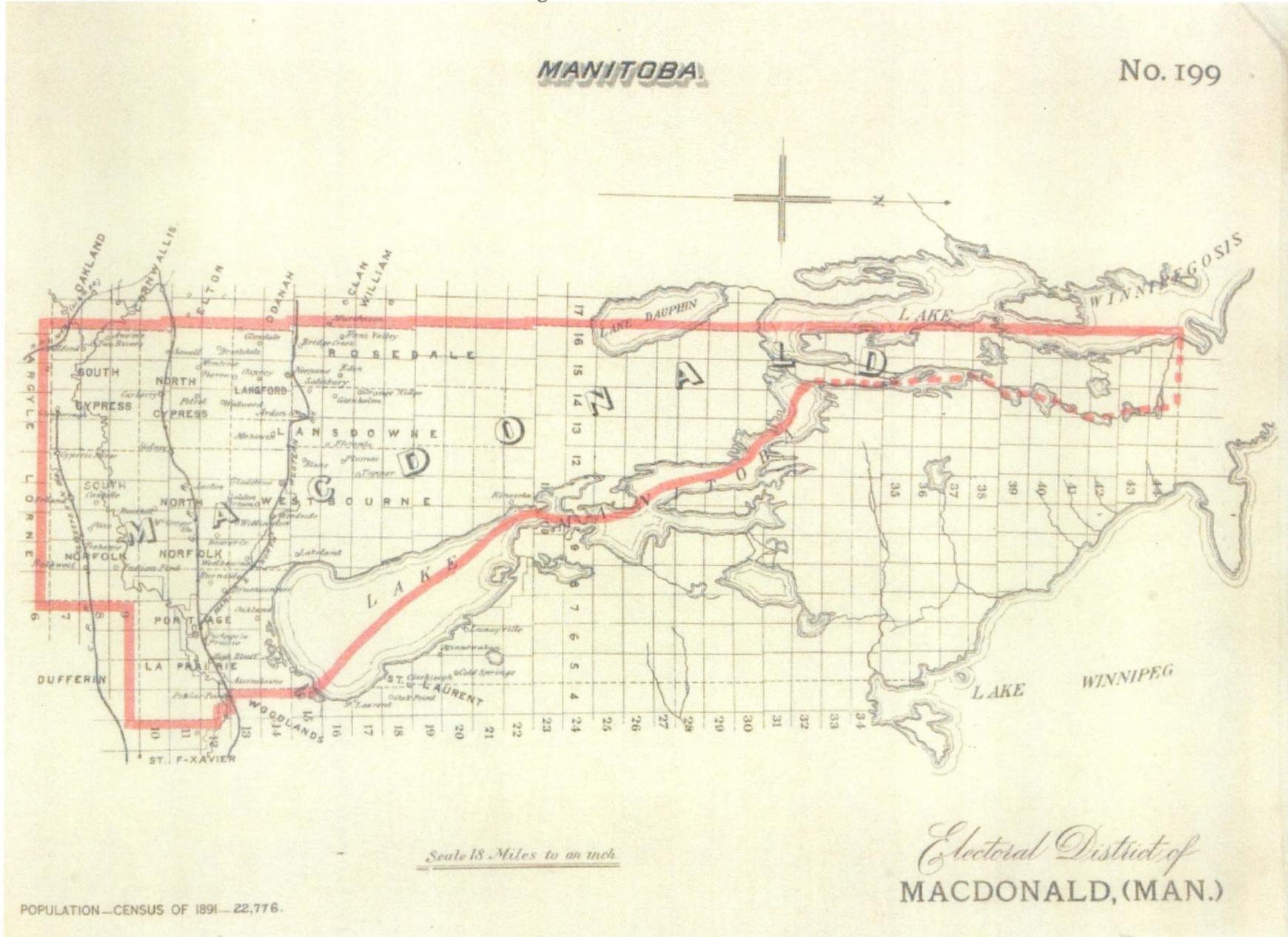
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Source: ArchiaNET : On-line Research Tool : [http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/020151/0201510408\\_e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/020151/0201510408_e.html)

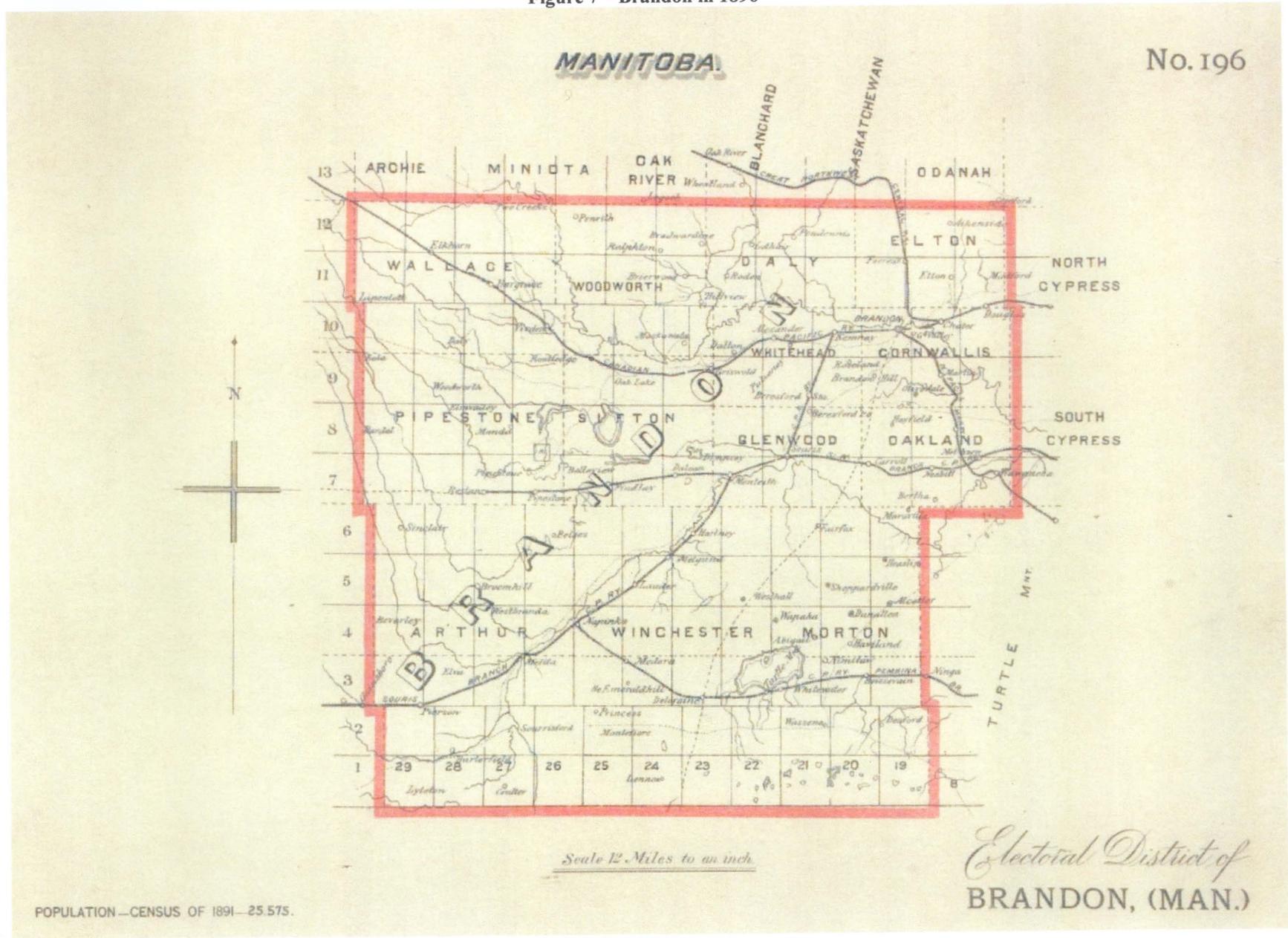
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Source: ArchiaNET : On-line Research Tool : [http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/020151/0201510408\\_e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/020151/0201510408_e.html)

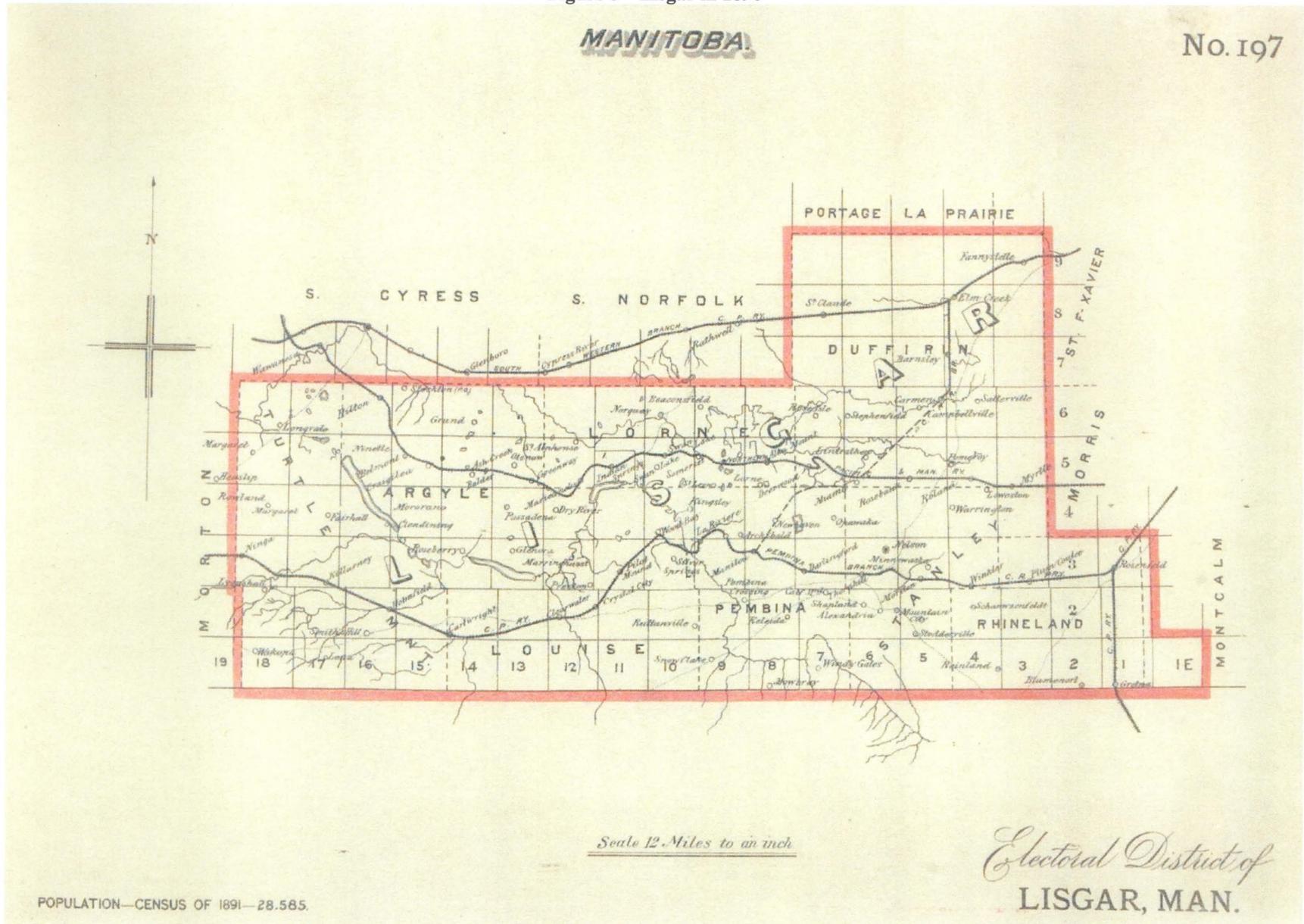


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## **CHAPTER I: Revisiting Political History**

Most of the literature on the federal election of 1896 in Manitoba examines the ramifications of the 1890 Manitoba School Act. These studies have been limited to issue politics that have narrowed the analysis to the debates among political leaders, the prominent, and newspaper editors. By and large, the activities of backbenchers and local activists, let alone the concerns and responses of the voters, have yet to be thoroughly examined in a serious manner. This chapter clears a path for the three primary targets of this thesis in two areas.

This chapter canvases the literature on the Canadian federal election of 1896 in Manitoba, as well as major works that explain the value of political and electoral histories. It comments on the existing body of literature that examines campaign management and party politics as they relate to the Manitoba campaign during a time when the party system in the province was relatively new and somewhat unstable.

The thesis will then turn to examine three related problems. First, the thesis identifies how and why the Conservatives defeated the Liberals and Patrons of Industry in Manitoba, despite the Conservatives' unpopular policy on the schools question. Second, it considers whether campaign management or election issues were more important to the outcome of the contest in Manitoba. Third, it questions whether education was the most significant campaign issue during the Manitoba campaign. In general, the thesis examines both campaign management and election issues to assess their importance to the outcome of the contest and to show how each factor contributed, or not, to the firming up of party lines in Manitoba.

\* \* \*

In *The Decline of Politics: The Conservatives and the Party System, 1901-1920*, John English described the 1896 general election as “one of those rare political events which deserves to be called a ‘turning point.’”<sup>1</sup> He explains that in the election, “Sir Wilfrid Laurier led a phalanx of Liberal premiers in the overthrow of the long-besieged Macdonald Conservatives.”<sup>2</sup> The Canadian federal election of 1896 has been studied at length with great emphasis on the policy debates among the party leaders and in the press. Most of this work on the 1890s was done several decades ago and very little has been written on the period in the last twenty-five years.<sup>3</sup> For the most part, these studies have chronicled the party leaders’ campaigns. A few of them have tried to analyse the connection between politics, religion, and party management in Ontario and Québec.<sup>4</sup>

Turning to the federal election in Manitoba, historical writing has concentrated almost exclusively on the consequences of the Federal Remedial bill of 1896 on Manitoba. Election

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<sup>1</sup> John English, *The Decline of Politics: The Conservatives and the Party System, 1901-1920* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Key works that have researched or commented on the federal election of 1896 include the following: Lovell C. Clark, “A History of Conservative Administrations, 1891-1896,” Ph. D. Dissertation (University of Toronto, 1968), 487-549; Ramsay Cook, *Provincial Autonomy, Minority Rights, and the Compact Theory, 1867-1921* (Ottawa: Studies of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, 1969), 44; R. C. Brown and Ramsay Cook, *A Nation Transformed: Canada, 1896-1921* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), 7; Paul Crunican, *Priests and Politicians: Manitoba Schools and the Election of 1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974); Elizabeth Eayrs, “The Election of 1896 in Western Ontario,” M.A. Thesis (University of Western Ontario, 1951); Kenneth McLaughlin, “Race, Religion, and Politics: The Federal Election of 1896 in Canada,” Ph. D. Dissertation (University of Toronto, 1974); and Peter Waite, *Arduous Destiny: Canada, 1874-1896* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), 272;

<sup>4</sup> Studies conducted that examine Canadian politics and elections, see the following: Murray Beck, *Pendulum of Power: Canada's Federal Election* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1968), 72-86; Donald Blake, “1896 and All That: Critical Elections in Canada,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* XII: 2 (1979), John English, *Decline of Politics: The Conservatives and the Party System, 1901-20* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 6; Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1987), 217-218; 259-279; S. J. R. Noel, *Patrons, Clients, and Brokers: Ontario Society and Politics, 1791-1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 307-309; H.B. Neatby, *Laurier and a Liberal Quebec: A Study in Political Management* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1973); A. I. Silver, *The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation, 1864-1900*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 216; Paul D. Stevens, “Laurier and the Liberal Party in Ontario, 1884-1911,” Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Toronto, 1966), 85-191; and Garth Stevenson, *Ex Uno Plures: Federal Provincial Relations in Canada, 1867-1896* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 126.

studies have not, however, adequately explained the following question. Why did Manitobans vote for an anti-Remedial, anti-coercionist, and provincial rights Liberal provincial party in January 1896, yet six months later, vote for a pro-Remedial, interventionist, centralist, federal Conservative party in June 1896?<sup>5</sup> The existing literature, all of which is now decades old, too readily assumes that the Manitoba School Question and the Remedial bill were the major political issues that mattered in the 1896 federal election in Manitoba. None, not even W.L. Morton's definitive history, have given a clear explanation as to whether the Remedial bill or fatigue about the issue, or other factors altogether, explain why the Manitoba Conservatives defeated the Manitoba Liberals in 1896. There has not been a thorough account of why the electorate of Manitoba did not side with Liberal principles and priorities in June of 1896 when they had done so in the January provincial election six months earlier. Briefly, the vast array of work on the federal election of 1896 in Manitoba examined the national political issues and political problems raised by the Manitoba School Question, rather than exploring Manitoba's political behaviour by trying to understand provincial political issues and practices.

The presuppositions and goals of research on Manitoba politics are epitomized in Paul Crunican's important study of the national impact of the Manitoba School Question, published more than thirty years ago.<sup>6</sup> Canadian historians like Crunican amplified the significance of National Schools as a major campaign issue during the federal election of 1896 because it related

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<sup>5</sup> See for example: J. M. S. Careless and R. C. Brown, *The Canadians, 1867-1967* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967), 125-126; Lovell Clark, *The Manitoba School Question: Minority Rights and the Compact Theory, 1896-1921* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1968), 184; R. C. Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), 7; Paul Crunican, *Priests and Politicians: Manitoba Schools and the Election of 1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 293; Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1987), 217-218; David Hall, *Clifford Sifton, Vol. 1, The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1981), 115; and W.L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 270-271; Peter Waite, *Arduous Destiny: Canada, 1874-1896* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), 272;

<sup>6</sup> Paul Crunican, *Priests and Politicians: Manitoba Schools and the Election of 1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974).

to their concerns about the nature of national politics and parties as well as the significance of the Schools Question.<sup>7</sup> It was the Manitoba School Act of 1890 that introduced a unitary, non-sectarian school system in the province, which was at the centre of debate.<sup>8</sup> The Manitoba School Question was more than just about religious and linguistic rights. It represented a blueprint for preparing Manitoba for massive European migration. In doing so, Thomas Greenway's Liberal government designed a framework for assimilating "new Canadians" into a culturally British, Protestant religious, and English language social order.

Crunican and others working in the 1960s and 1970s argued that the remedial bill played a significant role in influencing the vote in Canada since it redefined and re-evaluated federal-provincial relations regarding Sections 91 and 92 of the British North America Act. But these historians and others have not considered, for instance, whether the remedial bill had a major effect on voters in Manitoba as they cast their votes or parties as they organized their campaigns. If the remedial bill had a more substantial effect on French-speaking Conservatives than English-speaking Conservatives, why would Franco-Manitobans or even English Catholics vote for candidates who claimed that the 1890 School Act should remain, as many did? If not, what other election issues or electoral practices were important to Manitobans? Would not the French-

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<sup>7</sup> Donald Creighton, *Dominion of the North: A History of Canada*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1957); Edgar McInnis, *Canada: A Political and Social History* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston of Canada, 1947); W. L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957); Peter Waite, *Arduous Destiny: Canada 1874-1896* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971);

<sup>8</sup> For studies that link the 1896 federal election campaign with the social, political, and religious ramifications of the Manitoba Schools Act of 1890, see for example: Lovell C. Clark, *The Manitoba School Question: Minority Rights and the Compact Theory, 1896-1921* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1968), 184; Ramsay Cook, *Provincial Autonomy, Minority Rights, and the Compact Theory, 1867-1921* (Ottawa: Studies of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, 1969), 44; R. C. Brown and Ramsay Cook, *A Nation Transformed: Canada, 1896-1921* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), 7; Paul Crunican, *Priests and Politicians: Manitoba Schools and the Election of 1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 293; Terrence J. Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics: Gallicanism, Romanism, and Canadiansim* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 131-135; Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1987), 217-218; W.L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 270; Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada: The Vatican and Canadian Affairs in the Late Victorian Age*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 130-131; and Peter Waite, *Arduous Destiny: Canada, 1874-1896* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), 272;

Catholic minority be searching for a political party or leader championing and ensuring the follow-through to a constitutional remedy to which they were entitled, even though they did not? These questions and others open up the exploration of new explanations as the 1896 federal election was experienced by Manitobans.

In recent years, political and electoral histories have been condemned for their top down approach to studying the past. Specifically, critics claim that political and election history has tended towards a narrow and deterministic approach to the past, thereby neglecting wider issues important to the electorate, such as gender, race, and class, or even campaigning and organization itself.<sup>9</sup> In “The Midlife Crisis of the New Political History,” Paula Baker admits that political history has been charged with “attention to systematic regularities in patterns of political behaviour, the use of social science methods and concepts, a focus on parties and voters as the measurable links between popular political behaviour and policy – seems arthritic and slow.”<sup>10</sup> She responds by stating that critics of political history “often take hunks of the field’s arguments as a given [or fact].”<sup>11</sup> In examining American political history, Baker states that historical questions [from the critics] “often return to social and cultural historians’ concerns with gender, race, and class: politics is a way to get at those relationships, not the thing to be explained.”<sup>12</sup> In other words, the arguments from social histories often paint politics as a given,

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<sup>9</sup> For studies that have criticised conventional political history, see for example: Bettina Bradbury, “Women at the Hustings: Gender, Citizenship, and the Montreal By-Elections of 1832,” in *Rethinking Canada*, eds. M. Gleason and A. Perry (Don Mills, Oxford University Press, 2006), 73-93; Gerald Friesen, *Citizens and Nation: An Essay on History, Communication, and Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 6; Chad Gaffield, *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict*, 131; Peter Lambert and Philipp Schofield, *Making History: An Introduction to the History and Practices of A Discipline* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 39-53, 221-222; and John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*, revised 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (London, New York, and Toronto: Longman, 2002), 72-74;

<sup>10</sup> Paula Baker, “The Midlife of the New Political History,” *The Journal of American History* 86: 1 (1999), 158. For a more precise definition of the New Political History, see Ronald P. Formisano, “The New Political History and the Election of 1840,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23: 4 (1993), 661-682.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

when really, politics is not simply a backdrop to social or economic developments. Moreover, Baker concludes that political history needs to be studied seriously, because it helps to explain the evolution of the state and its citizens through an analysis of debates over public policy, the role of parties and other themes.

In Canada, too, political and election histories have been long considered unfashionable.<sup>13</sup> Practitioners of Canadian political history seem to have surrendered to the critical dismissal of political history. In *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict*, a study of the “language-of-instruction controversy in nineteenth-century Prescott County Ontario,” Chad Gaffield conceded that existing political histories are valuable, but only in certain narrow ways. These “political studies which emphasise particular elections deny a long-term perspective which situates periods of intense public debate within the appropriate context.”<sup>14</sup> Gaffield charges that political histories limit debate to high politics, thereby excluding the concerns of the average voter in their writings. Gaffield further states that “established political histories emphasise the speeches of provincial or federal leaders; but they rarely probe debate at the community level, which is assumed to have been engaged without a real life of its own.”<sup>15</sup> Even a practitioner of political history like Peter Waite seems to give ground to this critique by conceding that “past politics is not all of history.”<sup>16</sup> This is a peculiar comment given the broad and inclusive political scope of his work, and the manner in which Waite links society to politics. It seems that Gaffield and Waite argued that political histories are useful only when they are conducted as long-term perspectives on election issues.<sup>17</sup> According to these scholars, political and election studies are

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<sup>13</sup> John English, “National Politics and Government,” *A Student's Guide to Canadian History, volume II: Post-Confederation*, Doug Owram, ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 3.

<sup>14</sup> Chad Gaffield, *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict*, 131.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

<sup>16</sup> P.B. Waite, *Arduous Destiny*, xi.

<sup>17</sup> Chad Gaffield, *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict*, 131; and P. B. Waite, *Arduous Destiny*, xi.

too narrow, focus on the histories of the political elites, and do not contribute to deeper understanding of political decisions for the people who made or were affected by those decisions. This is the opposite of Paula Baker's defence of the new political history. It should be clear that this thesis is not discounting social and cultural factors that affect elections, but it emphasizes an explicit examination of political activity on the ground.

The goal in contemporary writing about politics and political history, as Baker urges, has changed to become less exclusionary than it was in the past. For example, the study of Canadian political history reveals how political parties changed after the Second World War to include minority groups that had been excluded from the political process.<sup>18</sup> Groundbreaking changes have made politics and the political process more than "the careers of dead white men," as elections have opened to all social, economic, sexual, and cultural groups. Gaffield and Waite had misunderstood the goal of election studies, which is to examine a campaign and a society at the microscopic level. In one of his works, Stephen Leacock suggested that a small "town and county is a hive of politics."<sup>19</sup> In his fictional portrayal of a small town community, he observed and proceeded to demonstrate that "people, who have only witnessed gatherings such as the House of Commons at Westminster and the Senate at Washington and never seen a Conservative Convention at Tecumseh Corners or a Liberal Rally at Concession school house, don't know what politics means."<sup>20</sup> While writing humorously, Leacock nonetheless showed how politics was central to everyday life in the age he portrayed. One could not afford, either socially or

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<sup>18</sup> Mary Kinnear, "Post-Suffrage Prairie Politics: Women Candidates in Winnipeg Municipal Elections, 1918-1939," *Prairie Forum* 16:1 (1991), 41-57; Mary Kinnear, *Margaret McWilliams: An Interwar Feminist* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill and Queen's University Press, 1991); Mary Kinnear, *In Subordination: Professional Women, 1870-1970* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill and Queen's University Press, 1991); and Linda Trimble, "'Good Enough Citizens': Canadian Women and Representation in Constitutional Deliberations," *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 17: Spring (1998), 131-156;

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Leacock, *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1931), 155.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

economically, to stand idle during candidate selection, the campaign period, and voting day in the Canada of the 1890s and 1900s that Leacock portrayed.

Geoffrey Elton, the eminent Tudor scholar and sometime Regius Professor of History at Cambridge University, offered a strong defence of political history throughout the late twentieth century. His editor, Wolfgang Saxon, stated that Elton was “firmly traditionalist in his interpretation of history.”<sup>21</sup> In *Political History: Principles and Practice*, a study that examines “the various criticisms that have been levelled against [political history],” Elton argued that political history explores why politicians and their colleagues “did things, or attempted or failed to do them; their thoughts, ambitions, and mistakes.”<sup>22</sup> Elton noted that political history is an exciting field, at times both humorous and tragic. In particular, Elton stated more firmly two goals of political historians. The first objective is to record the outcome of an event. The second objective is to describe how and why events happened.

Unlike more descriptive and analytical historians, the political historian is profoundly concerned to know what happened – exactly what happened. He wishes to follow the fortunes of a man, a party, an army, or a country through time, and when he has related how things happened, he has done his job. It includes for instance, the problem of why men did things, or attempted or failed to do them; their thoughts, ambitions, and mistakes are part of the story.<sup>23</sup>

Political and electoral histories should have an important place in the understanding of history. Moreover, political history has a responsibility to describe how and why people have held great respect for the pragmatic practices of liberal democracy, where the individual has the freedom to vote for a candidate who represents their community, their city, or their electoral district.

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<sup>21</sup> G. R. Elton, *Political History: Principles and Practice* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 58.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

Even historians committed to political history admit to the limitations and problems of understanding the past through politics. In 1994, historian and former M.P., John English, noted that political scientists had almost taken over writing of Canadian political history.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the major reason why political scientists and not historians now wrote political history was because “history” had become more “influenced by anthropology and sociology than by political science.”<sup>25</sup> He identified a number of limitations in their approach. He pointed out that political scientists writing history were often writing in the method of political economy, which stressed the significance and relevance of broad social scientific theory. English also argued that “too much of the new political economy is marked by scanty knowledge of secondary works, by an overly elaborate theoretical exposition, and by a source-mining which seeks to extract precious historical ore while lacking awareness of the baser metals in which it is found.”<sup>26</sup> Unlike the political scientist, fixated on broad and usual contemporary themes, the role of political historians is to facilitate when available, both qualitative and quantitative evidence to depict clear portraits of the political and electoral past. The political historian, English argued, should investigate voter concerns, expectations, and participation amongst other themes that affect the day to day living of parties and governments. Nevertheless, English’s point was that the “eclipse of political history should be properly seen as a temporary [challenging] event in the history of writing Canadian history.”<sup>27</sup> The tradition of writing Canadian history, he argues, occurs in

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<sup>24</sup> John English, “National Politics and Government,” *A Student’s Guide to Canadian History, volume II: Post-Confederation*, ed., Doug O’ram (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 3.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

cycles. In the late twentieth century, political history was in decline. In the 2000s, political history may be bouncing back.<sup>28</sup>

An election is the crucial time when the citizens and political parties interact. In *Letting the People Decide: Dynamics of a Canadian Election*, Richard Johnston et al. argue that “elections are not just about how voters choose,” but also “about how parties and leaders shape the alternatives from which the choice is made.”<sup>29</sup> They assert that during election campaigns, constituents are attuned to debates, news, and advertising. These methods help voters understand the implications of democracy and reveal the “capacity of Canadian voters to deliberate, to behave remarkably like actors who rarely appear on the stage of voting research.”<sup>30</sup> Political parties, as Lisa Young and William Cross point out, are organizations where “like minded individuals... join together with Canadians from other regions, and through the strength of their numbers, collectively exercise influence in party and public decision making.”<sup>31</sup> Local candidate nominations, candidate debates, and constituency races are part and parcel of the representation process, where one individual makes decision on behalf of a town, community, or region.

Politicians and political parties are subjected to the greatest scrutiny during elections. On the importance of elections in *The Canadian General Election of 2004*, Jon Pammett and Christopher Dornan state that the “performance of the politicians in general, and of the individual parties and leaders, will make a substantial difference in the outcome [of an election

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<sup>28</sup> Barry Ferguson and Robert Wardhaugh, “‘Impossible Conditions of Inequality’: John W. Dafoe, the Rowell-Sirois Royal Commission, and the Interpretation of Canadian Federalism,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 84: 4 (2003), 551-583; and Whitney Lackenbauer, *Battle Grounds: The Canadian Military and Aboriginal Lands* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006).

<sup>29</sup> Richard Johnston, André Blais, Henry E. Brady, and Jean Crête, *Letting the People Decide: Dynamics of a Canadian Election*, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1992), 3.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 15

<sup>31</sup> William Cross and Lisa Young, “Political Parties as Membership Organizations,” in William Cross, *Political Parties*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 14.

and] ... relations of citizens to their [elected] government.”<sup>32</sup> For example, the Liberal party under Paul Martin, in effect, declined to become the minority government as a result of the Federal Election of 2004 when Martin lost support from Western Canadians and Québeckers during the campaign. Liberal politicians held onto government by appealing to voters in parts of Southern Ontario, specifically in the Greater Toronto Area and the Maritimes. By doing so, the Liberal Party was extremely successful at managing and waging an effective campaign in a key region, despite the broader loss of voter support.<sup>33</sup>

Voters place high expectations on and carefully scrutinise politicians and political parties. In their earlier book, *The Canadian General Election of 2000*, Pammett and Dornan assert that voters have genuine expectations from politicians, especially “candidates, the election process, and the campaign.”<sup>34</sup> For instance, the Canadian Alliance pledged to represent the regional, economic, and political interests of Western Canadians in the House of Commons at Ottawa. The Canadian Alliance argued that a disproportionate number of Members of Parliament [Eastern to be specific] established government policy that favoured the business interests of Eastern Canadian corporations. In 2000, the Canadian Alliance promised to provide the cure for Western Canada’s politicized alienation and policy marginalisation in Ottawa.

Election studies are important to understanding the nature and complexities of public policy and social and economic trends in society. Historians Bettina Bradbury, Scott W. See, D. H. Bocking, and J. R. Miller have over the years written on specific electoral contests and contributed to understanding the complexities of elections and local communities themselves, in

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<sup>32</sup> Jon Pammett and Christopher Dornan, *The Canadian General Election of 2004*, (Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn, 2005), 26.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 363-386.

<sup>34</sup> ----, *The Canadian General Election of 2000*, (Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn, 2001), 10.

contrast to Gaffield's view.<sup>35</sup> Their essays show how political parties and candidates have designed or criticised government policy to repair and alleviate social, economic, and political problems. For instance, Bradbury concluded that "the numbers of women involved [in the Montreal by-election of 1832], the patterns of their voting, and the courage involved in exposing their bodies and reputations at the hustings, all suggest that politics mattered to them."<sup>36</sup> Bocking argued that elections in the former North-West Territories helped shape the drafting of the constitution, the role of courts, and the legislative assembly.<sup>37</sup> See showed that the specific political party, politician, or social group that maintained and inspired the crowd at a political gathering were the ones who "commanded the polls."<sup>38</sup> Miller claimed that "the Conservatives, given their organisation and business support, would have entered the [1891] election with a large edge almost regardless of the issues on which the contest ostensibly turned."<sup>39</sup> In 1896 in Manitoba, could one draw the same conclusions about political parties and candidates? As a whole, these election studies are significant because they underscore the distinctive historical, political, economic, and cultural issues that emerge from election contests.

Party politics is about the management of resources and the organisation of political issues. It is also about linking citizens to the state.<sup>40</sup> Political scientists Kenneth Carty, William Cross, and Lisa Young have tried to devise a genuinely historical account of Canadian politics. Young points out that, "crucial aspects of our politics, such as candidate recruitment, leadership

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<sup>35</sup> For recently published nineteenth-century electoral histories in Canada, see for example: Quentin Brown, "Swinging with the Governors," *Ontario History* 86: 4 (1994), 319-336; Scott W. See, "Polling Crowds and Patronage: New Brunswick's 'Fighting Elections' of 1842-3," *Canadian Historical Review* 63: 2 (1991), 127-156; D. H. Bocking, "Batoche Election 1888," *Saskatchewan History* 42: 1 (1989), 1-10; J. R. Miller, "The 1891 Election in Western Canada," *Prairie Forum* 10:1 (1985), 147-167.

<sup>36</sup> Bettina Bradbury, "Women at the Hustings", 90.

<sup>37</sup> D. Bocking, "Batoche Election 1888." *Saskatchewan History*. 42: 1 (1989), 1.

<sup>38</sup> See, Scott W. "Polling Crowds and Patronage: New Brunswick's 'Fighting Elections' of 1842-3," *Canadian Historical Review*, 63: 2 (1991): 126.

<sup>39</sup> J.R. Miller, "The 1891 Election in Western Canada," *Prairie Forum*, 10: 1 (1985), 165.

<sup>40</sup> Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957).

selection, election campaigning, public policy agenda setting and governing, are projects dominated by the parties.”<sup>41</sup> An election is a time for voters to decide who will create and revise policy to handle the political and economic issues that affect the city, province, or country. In *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, Carty, Cross, and Young assert that, “Canada more than any other country has been defined by its politicians, its political parties, and patterns of party competition.”<sup>42</sup> In other words, “politicians created [Canada] in considerable part to solve partisan deadlocks; they grew it through a series of deliberate political acts, adding provinces and territories on favourable political terms.”<sup>43</sup> The greatest political challenge for Canadian politicians was to “represent and contain the linguistic and religious divisions of the new state.”<sup>44</sup> They also argue that “the politicians of Canada’s first half-century were predominantly local men who gathered cadres of partisan supports around them at election time.”<sup>45</sup> In their opinion, Canadian politicians used party politics to aid in the creation, shaping and interpretation of some form of national government policy out of the intense localization of the voters. They have developed a historical framework describing the development of political parties in Canada, a framework first used by Carty in the 1990s. This framework describes the national party system and its changing characteristics in terms of three or four distinct systems.

The First Party System was created between 1867 and 1920. Canadian political leaders at the national level were building a nation through the constructions of political coalitions.

Two parties, Conservatives and Liberals, completely dominated the public life of that first party system, and the equation that governed the competition between them was straightforward. With both parties having a real presence in all parts of the country, and many of small ridings decided by no more than a few hundred

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<sup>41</sup> William Cross, *Political Parties* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 5-6.

<sup>42</sup> R. Kenneth Carty, William Cross, and Lisa Young, *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 14.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-15.

votes, these most parochial of party organizations created a system of real national competition.<sup>46</sup>

National political leaders shared power between French and English and/or Catholic and Protestant politicians and bureaucrats to broaden their base of political and party support. Specifically, politicians used patronage politics, a method and tool to acquire voter support. For example, key appointments were made to those who supported National Policy or National Schools. In "Party Government, Representation, and National Integration in Canada," David Smith argues that "Macdonald was the first to see that political parties could be the agents of [party] nourishment. And it is [John A. Macdonald] who used patronage to build up not merely party loyalty, but party structures outside the assembly."<sup>47</sup> In *Ex Uno Plures*, Garth Stevenson argues that "patronage was the trading of benefits and favours for political support, [which] was universally considered to be an essential aspect of representative government."<sup>48</sup> In "Patronage, Etiquette, and the Science of Connection: Edmund Bristol and Political Management, 1911-21," Alan Gordon examined the patronage files of an Ontario M.P. for Centre Toronto. He argues that "political managers wield patronage primarily as an electoral tool. Insofar as patronage served any political purpose, it was to supply these managers with the powerful machines necessary to promote national unity in Canada."<sup>49</sup> It is the party systems model that helps to explain the reason why and how Manitoba Conservatives defeated all other political parties in the province.

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 16; and "Three Canadian Party Systems: An Interpretation of the Development of National Politics," in *Party Politics in Canada*, ed. Hugh G. Thornburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Vancouver: Prentice Hall, 2001), 16-35.

<sup>47</sup> David Smith, "Party Government, Representation and National Integration in Canada," in Peter Aucoin, *Party Government, and Regional Representation in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 17.

<sup>48</sup> Garth Stevenson, *Ex Uno Plures: Federal Provincial Relations in Canada, 1867-1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 37.

<sup>49</sup> Alan Gordon, "Patronage, Etiquette, and the Science of Connection: Edmund Bristol and Political Management, 1911-21," *Canadian Historical Review*, 80: 1 (1999), 1.

The Second Party System in Canada emerged from the collapse of the first party system in the 1910s, and flourished between 1921 and 1957. In *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, Carty, Cross, and Young define the second party system as one which “the dominant politicians of the period [who] were regional political bosses articulating regional interests and carrying their regions with them as they practiced a politics of accommodation that came to be known as “regional brokerage.”<sup>50</sup> “Clients” became those who had access to sway and yield votes for a politician or a political party. Under both the first and second party systems, Canadian politicians worked to shape the political landscape and government by either granting political appointments to trusted allies or brokering deals with influential members of local communities to seek votes. Such an intricate system meant that politicians cultivated deep-seated and local party loyalty for votes.

The Third Party System in Canada arose from the decline of the second party system and in the late 1960s, and functioned from the 1960s to the 1990s. Carty and his colleagues define the third system as “no longer in the brokerage business of catering to the peculiarities of the country’s various regions.”<sup>51</sup> Instead, it became a politics aiming to rebuild “a Canadian community, and it became the task of parties in the third party system to define a national agenda to mobilise Canadians.”<sup>52</sup>

This framework is a useful way of mapping the history of party politics and an important summary of current thinking about party politics. Still, it does have one important limitation which helps to understand the significance of the Manitoba in 1896. Put bluntly, their model of a national system does not necessarily fit the pattern of development for every province. The party

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<sup>50</sup> Carty et al., *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, 16-17.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

system was non-existent in provinces like British Columbia until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and had barely emerged in the Manitoba of the 1890s, only to almost collapse again by the 1920s. As well, the division of politics into two parties was never a particularly popular one in Prairie Canada, including Manitoba, where a strong non-partisan tradition is discernible through much of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>53</sup> The first two Premiers who led party governments, Greenway and the Liberals from 1888 to 1900, Rodmond Roblin and the Conservatives from 1900 to 1915, each had changed party affiliation during the formative period of party politics in the 1880s and 1890s in Manitoba.<sup>54</sup>

One point Carty, Cross and Young acknowledge is the importance of organization and campaigning. To win elections, politicians and political parties prepared their volunteers and supporters to wage an effective and efficient campaign. Rod Bruinooge, M.P. for Winnipeg South, wrote about his campaign in the federal election of 2006:

In terms of campaign management, I would say this is an area that my team was very focused on. As you know, this election was the second time that I ran so we did have the experience from the last campaign to draw on. This time around, we focused on three priorities. The first was voter identification, which we did through a mixture of phone calls and door to door canvassing. The second was voter contact, which we achieved through the door canvassing, a newspaper brochure, an effective sign blitz, and an aggressive media strategy. The final priority was a diligent get out and vote drive on Election Day that I think was the most vital factor.<sup>55</sup>

Many studies of recent Canadian politics have examined political management, party organisation, competition, and brokerage politics on the campaign trails.<sup>56</sup> These studies have

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<sup>53</sup> W.L. Morton, "The Bias of Prairie Politics", in Donald Swainson, editor, *Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces* (Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, 1970); Brian McCutcheon, "The Patrons of Industry in Manitoba, 1890-1898." *Manitoba Historical Society Transactions*. (No. 22, 1965-66 season).

<sup>54</sup> See unpublished essays by Gerald Friesen, "John Norquay", James Mochoruk, "Thomas Greenway" and James Blanchard, "Roblin P. Roblin" in B. Ferguson & R. Wardhaugh, editors, *The Premiers of Manitoba*. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, Forthcoming.

<sup>55</sup> Rod Bruinooge to Roland Pajares, 7 March 2006.

<sup>56</sup> For studies that focus on political and campaign management in Canada, see for example: André Blais et al., *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory: Making Sense of the Vote in the 2000 Canadian Election* (Mississauga:

defined brokerage politics as the process by which politicians, candidates, and political parties strike deals to sidestep and circumvent conflict. Popular resistance to party policy could be perceived as the road blocks that prevents government from passing legislation against the ebb and flow of the popular opinion of a country. It is also the reason political leaders have failed to win votes and achieve voter loyalty.<sup>57</sup>

In the federal election of 1896 in Manitoba, candidates, or their managers, announced meetings to a newspaper agency. Candidates and their managers understood the significance of election management. The typical campaign rally varied in several ways. At times, rallies had as little as a dozen farmers present, while others had large gathering of more than two hundred. Some campaign rallies had large bands that helped stir the emotional chords of the crowds. In some cases, candidate speeches were two hours or more in length.<sup>58</sup> Opponents were usually invited to answer questions or present a short statement to the crowd.<sup>59</sup> Meetings were held regardless of weather, and in spite of transportation difficulties.<sup>60</sup> It was at these public meetings that people were able to discuss the most important salient political issues that concerned the community, riding, and province and to experience the influence of party managers and brokers.

The history of the vote in Canada in the late nineteenth century was mostly exclusive to those with property, male, and at most times white. "The voters' list used in federal elections, under the terms of the Confederation settlement, were composed and validated by the provincial

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Broadview Press, 2002); Allan Blakeney and Sandford Borins, *Political Management in Canada: Conversation on Statecraft*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 82-88; William Cross, *Political Parties* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 9, 45; Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, ed., *The Canadian General Election of 2004* (Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn, 2005); and Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, ed. *The Canadian General Election of 2000* (Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn, 2001).

<sup>57</sup> Michael Bliss, *Right Honourable Men: The Descent of Canadian Politicians from Macdonald to Chrétien*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2004), especially 277-307.

<sup>58</sup> "Macdonald at Elkhorn," *Manitoba Free Press*, 4 June 1896, 1, and "Political Meetings," *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 10 June 1896, 2.

<sup>59</sup> "McCarthy at Hartney," *Manitoba Free Press*, 30 May 1896, 1; "Lisgar," *Manitoba Free Press*, 1 June 1896, 1.

<sup>60</sup> "Meeting at Pilot Mound," *The Winnipeg Tribune*, 5 June 1896, 1.

governments.”<sup>61</sup> John Courtney argues that “in 1867 the balance was clearly tipped in the direction of a restrictive view of the franchise. Section 41 of the British North America Act stated that provincial franchises would apply to elections of members to serve the House of Commons until Parliament decided otherwise.”<sup>62</sup> For the most part, “electors had to be British subjects by birth or naturalization, male, property owners, and at least twenty-one years of age.”<sup>63</sup> By 1885, the federal government took over the responsibility to who could vote, “only to hand it back to the provinces 13 years later.”<sup>64</sup> In addition, it was known that “in most federal elections between 1867 and 1920, the makeup of the electorate varied from province to province.”<sup>65</sup> What this means is that the electorate was skewed in several ways and that immigrants may well have found it difficult to vote in some ridings. It is notable Manitoba election officials enfranchised ethnic groups like Icelanders and “Scandinavians” but probably isolated others, notably the Métis.

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The secondary sources for this project have suggested new ways to understand the federal election of 1896 in Manitoba. Recent political and electoral studies focus on how elections are won and emphasize how important local interests and concerns were in late nineteenth century Canada. These studies merit serious attention, since they serve to remind historians to question thoroughly the means by which political leaders conveyed ideas to garner voter loyalty and win electoral support. They serve to challenge historians to ask whether electoral issues or election management were more important in shaping the campaign. This thesis will examine the federal

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4. <sup>61</sup> Gordon Steward, “John A. Macdonald’s Greatest Triumph,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 63: 1 (1982),

<sup>62</sup> Courtney, *Elections*, 24.

<sup>63</sup> For more information on the franchise in Canada see Courtney, *Elections*, 24-26.

<sup>64</sup> “Different Rights in Different Provinces,” [http://www.civilization.ca/hist/elections/el\\_017\\_e.html](http://www.civilization.ca/hist/elections/el_017_e.html)

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

campaign in Manitoba, drawing on private correspondence, newspaper reports, political cartoons, and campaign rallies, in order to weigh the interplay of electoral issues and election management in 1896. Newspapers were partisan, especially in places such as Winnipeg and other large urban centres, where newspapers vied for readers. But small town newspapers could not afford to insult readers or potential advertisers by excessive partisanship and it seems likely that newspaper partisanship was declining by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Brian Beaven, "Partisanship, Patronage, and the Press in Ontario, 1880-1914", *Canadian Historical Review*, 64: 3 (1983), 317-351.

## CHAPTER II: The Conservative Campaign

After Sir John A. Macdonald's death in 1891, the federal Conservative party went through a series of leadership changes that both reflected and contributed to its disarray. Under John J. C. Abbott (1891-1892), John S. D. Thompson (1892-1894), Mackenzie Bowell (1894-1896), and Charles Tupper (1896), the Conservatives grappled with political and economic issues that carried the party into Canada's eighth general election.<sup>1</sup> At this time, an economic downturn during the 1890s had seriously crippled Canada's and Manitoba's economy. Social and religious conflict had become increasingly common. Historians have long argued that the Conservative party by the 1890s had suffered from divisions in its own ranks and lacked the strong leadership and internal consensus that might have steered it to victory.<sup>2</sup>

In the federal election of 1896, Manitoba Conservatives offered various alternatives for vote-getting purposes. In one instance, some Manitoba Conservatives decided to split from the Conservative party over a controversial election issue, for what they believed was in their best interest to win. However, at question here is what did the Conservative candidates believe was more important as a winning strategy to win, election management or election issues?

This chapter discusses the condition of the Conservative party in Manitoba. It analyses the political climate of Manitoba from the perspective of Conservative candidates. The chapter provides a detailed account of five of the seven Manitoba Conservative candidates and their campaigns, concentrating on the five candidates whose campaigns were the most extensively

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<sup>1</sup> Studies that examine the Conservative party during the late nineteenth century include: Lovell Clark, "A History of Conservative Administrations, 1891-1896." Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Toronto (1968); Lovell Clark, "The Conservative Party in the 1890s," *Canadian Historical Association* (1961-1962), 58-74; Ramsay Cook, "Tillers and Toilers: The Rise and Fall of Populism in Canada in the 1890s," *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers. Communications historiques*, (1984), 1-20; Peter B. Waite, *Arduous Destiny: Canada, 1878 - 1896* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), 229-281, 312-318.

<sup>2</sup> W.L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 269; John Saywell, ed. *The Canadian Journal of Lady Aberdeen, 1893-1898*, (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1960).

documented. Very little documented material is available for the remaining two Conservative candidates. The chapter has three specific goals. The first is to highlight the political and economic issues that the Conservative candidates used to distinguish themselves from the others during the contest. The second is to examine whether the provocative issue of education, or an other salient election issue, was more important to the Conservative candidates in the contest. The third is to investigate the campaign management strategies of the Conservative party in Manitoba.

### **The Conservative Party in the Federal Election of 1896**

In 1896, the Conservative party's platform under new leader, but political veteran, Charles Tupper, reverted to the programmes and strategies that been developed under Sir John A. Macdonald. Tupper tried to rebuild an amicable working political relationship between Catholic and Protestant, French and English, sections of the party. In one sense, the party objective was to ensure that Macdonald's and Cartier's vision of Confederation would be preserved. Under Tupper, the party reemphasised economic policies through a strong central government. Thus, the main planks of the Conservative party were to maintain and preserve the federal tariff, promote the C.P.R., develop and administer the prairie lands, and pass remedial school legislation in Manitoba.<sup>3</sup> Tupper managed to partially mediate the serious disagreement within the Conservative party about remedial legislation by emphasising that the federal government was simply defending the constitutional order as determined by the courts.<sup>4</sup>

In the run-up to the 1896 federal election, Members of Parliament and other Conservative politicians, especially in Québec, had pressured the federal government to disallow the Manitoba

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<sup>3</sup> On the National Policy, see Donald Creighton, *John A. Macdonald: The Old Chieftain*, (Toronto: The MacMillan Company, 1955); reprint, *John A. Macdonald: The Young Politician and the Old Chieftain* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 185, 250, 275, and 352 (page citations are to the reprint edition); V.C. Fowke, "The National Policy – Old and New," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* 18: 3 (1952), 271-275.

<sup>4</sup> Lovell Clark, *The Manitoba School Question: Majority Rule or Minority Rights*, (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1968), 116-117.

School Act (1890). Québec Conservatives believed that Catholic education was a guaranteed protected right under the British North America Act. The Conservative government's only election strategy, amidst the "internal dissensions, a severe economic hurricane, and a religious cyclone" in the 1890s, was to resolve the constitutional implications of remedial legislation.<sup>5</sup> In April of 1896, five of the seven Manitoba Conservative candidates who campaigned in Manitoba indicated that voting in their favour would preserve the constitutional structure, created by Macdonald and Cartier and adjudicated by the courts, in which both Protestant and Catholic worked cooperatively and fairly. The five Conservative candidates examined in this chapter show that electioneering and campaigning were crucial to their victories.

### **Manitoba Conservative Candidates in the Federal Election of 1896**

In Manitoba, the newspaper accounts and the correspondence of Conservative candidates were replete with descriptions of campaign issues and tactics. The topics and themes in private correspondence included the protective tariff, the National Policy, political appointments, railroads, and military organisation, as well as provincial rights and education issues. Manitoba Conservatives structured their campaign mainly through an aggressive re-election strategy based on a combination of hard campaigning and brokerage politics. The political issues that brought the most attention were the protective tariff and education. The private correspondence, campaign speeches and tactics, and newspapers accounts reveal that Conservatives relied heavily on campaign management rather than policy themes to defeat all other parties. All candidates espoused concern about a number of economic and political issues. They also revealed differences among themselves on the issue of the Manitoba School Act. The most important issue in public discussions was the National Policy.

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<sup>5</sup> Arthur Lower, *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1946), 398

Several Manitoba Conservative candidates broke away from the party lines to advocate distinct and even independent positions related especially to the provocative issue of education and the Manitoba School Question. Dr. William Roche and W.A. Macdonald had publicly broken with from the party position on Remedial Legislation.

The Conservative party in Manitoba was divided into two distinct groups. First, there were Conservative candidates who declared that they overtly favoured Conservative policy for remedial legislation. This group included Hugh John Macdonald (Winnipeg), A. A. C. LaRivière (Provencher), Hugh Armstrong (Selkirk), William Nathaniel Boyd (Macdonald), and Robert Rogers (Lisgar).

Hugh John Macdonald, the only son of John A. Macdonald, was considered the favourite to win in the Winnipeg constituency. A lawyer by profession, he had received his education at the University of Toronto and was called to the Ontario bar in 1872.<sup>6</sup> In the North-West Rebellion of 1885, he gained the rank of Captain.<sup>7</sup> As a Conservative M.P. for Winnipeg from 1891 to 1893, he had served as Minister of the Interior, but resigned in 1893 only to seek re-election in 1896 after pleas from Tupper.<sup>8</sup> Macdonald eventually favoured the Remedial bill and remedial legislation, but only after tortuous deliberations with members of the party.

As an urban riding, Winnipeg was a growing constituency whose population increased 65% in population between 1891 and 1901.<sup>9</sup> In *Winnipeg's First Century*, Ruben Bellan argued

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<sup>6</sup> J.M. Bumsted, "Hugh John Macdonald," *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography* (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 153.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>8</sup> Military appointments in Canada's military were notoriously prone to political influence, *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>9</sup> In 1896, the religious composition of Winnipeg included four dominant religious groups. These religious groups were Anglican at 24%, Presbyterian at 24%, Methodists at 16%, and Roman Catholic at 12%. Kenneth McLaughlin's study of the 1896 Federal election tested the conventional view that religion played a fundamental role in deciding voting allegiance and the manner in which constituents cast their vote. McLaughlin argues that "in the English speaking province, the belief that there was a strong Catholic vote, or for that matter, a Presbyterian, Methodist, or a Baptist vote, had long been a part of the Canada's political tradition" (McLaughlin, 1974). McLaughlin conducted a linear correlation (the Pearson correlation) "to discover whether a relations between

that “the historic enterprise of building an agricultural economy upon the Canadian Prairie proceeded slowly at the outset, retarded by severe obstinate difficulties.”<sup>10</sup> According to Bellan, “the C.P.R. charged high tolls, giving rise to angry complaints and insistent demands for competing railways.”<sup>11</sup> Simply stated, the farming community wanted access to open markets constrained by the monopolisation of the C.P.R. In other words, Winnipeg was extremely dependent on the railways for trade and access to trading in international markets.

Just before the start of the federal campaign on 15 April 1896, Macdonald wrote to Charles Tupper stating that he doubted whether the federal government had the right to interfere in a provincial matter. “I am afraid that I must acknowledge that the view of the School Question which you present so fully in it, namely the phrase based upon the rights of the Roman Catholic Minority by treaty, does not affect me much as it perhaps ought to do.”<sup>12</sup> Macdonald’s ambivalence towards the issue of education made him an interesting character. Regardless of his ambivalence, Macdonald followed an election strategy to win votes. He relied on the political deals with who could bring in votes for Manitoba Conservatives.

In the month of June 1896, Macdonald held nineteen public meetings. The frequency of Macdonald’s activity on the hustings suggests that contact with voters was central to his campaign. In the early part of June 1896, Macdonald had campaigned outside Manitoba for the Conservatives in Assiniboia and in Calgary. On 10 June at a campaign rally in Calgary, “an immense meeting of the largest of the present campaign including a great number of ladies

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religious affiliation and voting behaviour” (McLaughlin, 1974). The results of his study were that there was “no statistical evidence to support the existence of a “Catholic vote.” He further argues that “the voting behaviour of Roman Catholics in constituencies in which their Bishop ordered them to support the Conservative party,” he writes, as they even “produced the most perfectly random voting patterns” (McLaughlin, 1974). His results do not include Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, Manitoba, and the Northwest Territories because of inconclusive statistical data.

<sup>10</sup> Ruben Bellan, *Winnipeg’s First Century*, (Winnipeg: Queenston House Publishing, 1978), 39.

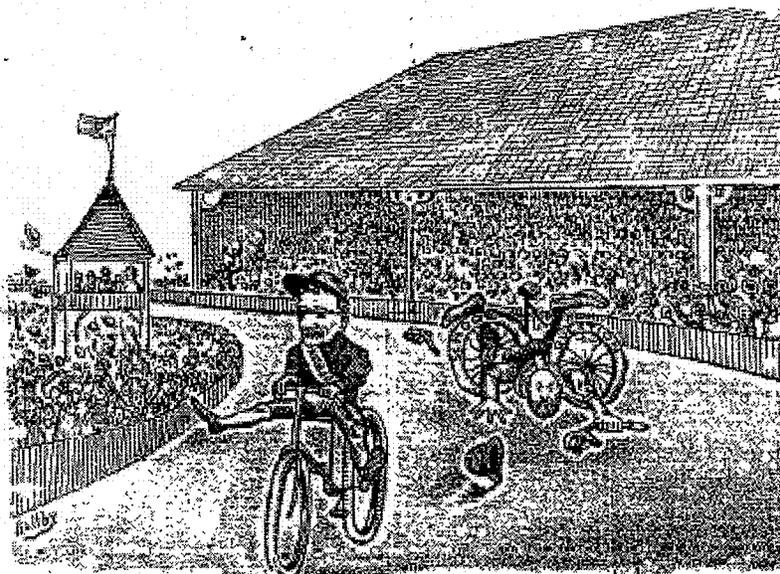
<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 43

<sup>12</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Tupper Papers*. Macdonald to Tupper, 15 April 1896, 5520 - 5523.

crowded into the opera house last night to hear Hon. Hugh John Macdonald.”<sup>13</sup> While he was away, he had other organisers and campaigners continue to work for him in Winnipeg.

Political cartoons in newspapers are useful to illustrate and shed light on controversial political issues during election campaigns. In *Behind the Jester's Mask: Canadian Editorial Cartoons about Dominant and Minority Groups, 1960-1979*, Raymond Morris argues that “each of these artistic conventions can be a vehicle for rhetoric and hence ideology.”<sup>14</sup> Morris further argues that “the cartoonist creates an imaginary world and uses it to offer commentary on politics.”<sup>15</sup> By the 1890s, political cartoons had been a regular feature of political reporting in most newspapers. Manitoba newspapers usually used local cartoons that commented on the provincial scene or riding issues, but they often used cartoons from Toronto papers as well.

## The Ottawa Race.



HUGH JOHN AN EASY WINNER!!!

Source: *Daily Nor'Wester*, 16 June 1896, 1.

<sup>13</sup> “Hugh John’s Tour,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 11 June 1896, 2.

<sup>14</sup> Raymond Morris, *Behind the Jester's Mask: Canadian Editorial Cartoons about Dominant and Minority Groups, 1960- 1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 92.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

In its cartoon on 16 June 1896, the staunch Conservative newspaper, *The Nor'Wester*, depicts the election as a spectator sport. It shows Hugh John Macdonald (left) peddling his way on a bicycle to victory over Liberal candidate Joseph Martin (right). The cartoon illustrated that Martin had fallen over on his bicycle, while Macdonald had effortlessly won the battle, coasting to victory. Earlier, on 14 June, the usually Liberal *Manitoba Free Press*, but then anti-Greenway and Sifton, reported that Captain Carruthers spoke for the Conservative party. "In spite of the heat and outside attractions, a large crowd assembled to hear the latest from political headquarters."<sup>16</sup> Another supporter, Sampson Walker, claimed that "the school question is a big will of the wisp created to mislead the electors of Winnipeg."<sup>17</sup> Returning to Winnipeg on 17 June 1896, Macdonald held a rally at Mulvey School, where the *Free Press* claimed that "the large room was crowded and utmost enthusiasm was demonstrated [by the supporters]."<sup>18</sup>

Clearly, there were other issues beyond the Remedial bill in Macdonald's campaign.<sup>19</sup> In the *Manitoba Free Press*, a reporter noted what Macdonald had said about remedial legislation: "Oh good. Let that alone. Leave that to Joe. That's his platform, don't you step on it."<sup>20</sup> Macdonald emphasized that the Conservative party had other issues to raise during the election. For instance, the Conservatives realised the significance of the Hudson's Bay Railway and the advantages of railways heading both north and south out of Winnipeg. Macdonald saw the importance and benefit of opening competitive railway markets in Manitoba, truly a remarkable break from the railway policy engineered by his father.

A political cartoon in *The Nor'Wester* on 18 June 1896 depicted Joseph Martin (left, Liberal candidate for Winnipeg), Manitoba Premier Thomas Greenway (centre), and Wilfrid

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<sup>16</sup> "The Party Leaders," *Manitoba Free Press*, 15 June 1896, 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

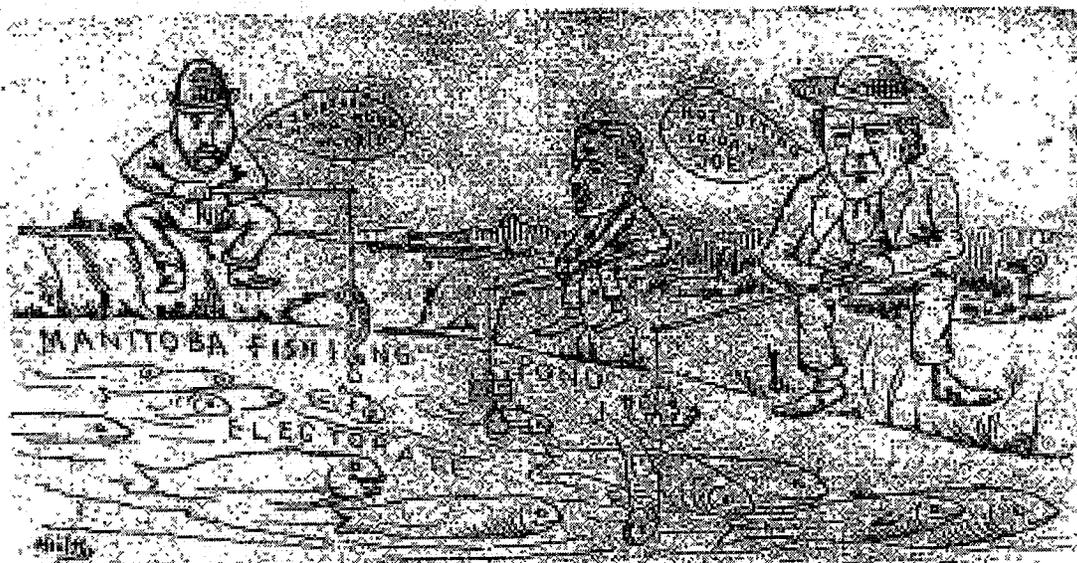
<sup>18</sup> "Meeting Tonight," *Manitoba Free Press*, 18 June 1896, 1.

<sup>19</sup> "A Rousing Meeting," *Manitoba Free Press*, 3 June 1895, 1.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

Laurier (right), fishing for votes in Manitoba. The fishermen are idle and the fish they seek do not represent specific issues. Laurier states in the cartoon “that the fish are not biting Joe!” The cartoon depicts the three politicians fishing for the attention of the electoral fish. It appears that the fishermen have nothing for bait to catch the electorate. The cartoon suggests that the Liberal candidates, though busy fishing, have nothing to lure the electorate.

## Three Busy Fishermen.



But the Manitoba Electorate Are Not Biting at the Bait Offered.

Source: *Daily Nor'Wester*, 2 June 1896, 1.

Railways were one of the most critical themes in Manitoba politics, and in Manitoba's relations with the federal government from the 1880s to the 1900s.<sup>21</sup> In *The Office of the Lieutenant Governor*, John Saywell shows that the battle over railway building accounted for by far the largest number of the numerous Manitoba court challenges constitutionally to Federal

<sup>21</sup> Leonard F. Earl, "The Hudson's Bay Company," *MHS Transactions* (Series 3: No. 2, 1957-1958), 26.

authority in the years between 1867 and 1915.<sup>22</sup> Macdonald and the Conservatives promised Manitobans their commitment to hasten action towards the completion of the Hudson's Bay Railway.

In that same report in the *Daily Nor'Wester*, Macdonald said that the development of the Northwest quarter of Canada had been promised by Charles Tupper and the Conservative Party. At the Brydon Rink,<sup>23</sup> Macdonald said that if the Conservative party remained in office, he pledged himself to support the Hudson's Bay Railway. "A promise has been held out to you for the material advancement of the Northwest," he said.

Sir Charles Tupper has made a promise, he made it as the Premier of Canada, and you will remember he is no weak premier. In this very rink, he said plainly that if his government were sustained, the Hudson's Bay railway would be built not as a colonisation road to Saskatchewan. He pledged himself to build the railway within two years to the Saskatchewan, and he added that it would be pushed through to the Bay as rapidly as possible.<sup>24</sup>

Macdonald also noted the necessity of this railway. Labourers, workers, and urban developers moved quickly to meet the demands of the Eastern manufacturers, who were eager to ship their products in Prairie markets.

Macdonald explained that the Hudson's Bay route offered a reasonable and sustainable alternative route to grain markets. Public ownership, he argued, was the best method to present prairie farmers and business freedom of choice in deciding a market to sell their goods.

All of us know the great necessity there is for another railway, for a northern outlet. The only way we can get a material reduction on the freight rates is by getting a short route to the sea, and the only short route to the sea is via the

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<sup>22</sup> John Saywell, *Office of The Lieutenant Governor: A Study in Canadian Government and Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 179. See also W. L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967).

<sup>23</sup> Built for the Thistle Curling Club, it was later bought by Brydon and Charlesworth "who originally planned to use it for a warehouse, but instead turned it into a skating rink. This Thistle Rink, or Brydon Rink as it came to be known, was the home of Winnipeg Hockey in 1891-92," in Morris Mott, "An Immense Hold in the Public Estimation: The First Quarter Century of Hockey in Manitoba, 1886-1911," *Manitoba History*, Summer/Spring 2002, 3-4.

<sup>24</sup> "Hugh John, Forever! Grand Conservative Rally. Victory is Ours," *Daily Nor'Wester*, 19 June 1896, 1.

Hudson's Bay railway. Here farmers require a rebate in freight rates, and this cannot be got from a private railway company, because the first duty of such a company is driven by the shareholders. Has the Northern Pacific Railway reduced their rates? And the same will obtain with any railway company running to the Atlantic coast, and the only way to get refused freight rates is to build a road to the Hudson's Bay.<sup>25</sup>

Macdonald noted that he would "resign in a heartbeat" if the government failed to achieve this goal.<sup>26</sup> The railway expansion project in Manitoba, he said, was integral to the economic survival of Manitoba businesses.

I am decidedly in favour of constructing and operating the Hudson's Bay railway, as a government railroad, but at the same time I am aware that under existing circumstances it would be impossible to carry a measure favouring such a scheme through the Dominion parliament, and that the best that can be expected now is that the government of Canada should grant such aid to the promotion of this railway as will enable them to construct it.<sup>27</sup>

Macdonald emphasized that the development and planning of the expansion of western railroads was important for the economic success of farmers and other investments placed in the province. In other words, his railway plan was a highly revised version of the National Policy. It was part of his campaigning tactic to emphasise this point. Indeed, Hugh John Macdonald was centred upon the economic goals of western Canada, quite the departure from his father's platform.

Macdonald certainly had an odd position on the School question. In a private letter, Macdonald asked Tupper to not to force him to give up principles, especially on the issue of education.<sup>28</sup> Macdonald wanted to freely express his political and social views that affected his province. In Macdonald's view, it was important that he could freely express his personal opinions and not simply toe the party line when voting on legislation. Since there were many

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Tupper Papers*. Macdonald to Tupper, 3 April 1896, 5476 – 5480.

voters in Manitoba who rejected Remedial Legislation, Macdonald wanted Tupper to see that education was still a sensitive issue.

I really do not see how I can become your colleague without throwing principles to the winds, and that you would not ask me to do. I wish you had not done so, for I can assure you that if I do go into the Cabinet, it will be simply to please you and not for the hope of reward.<sup>29</sup>

Macdonald worried that adhering to the party line would strain his professional and personal relationship with the prime minister because he could not freely express his concerns about the federal Conservative policy.<sup>30</sup> Undeniably this was a clear example that highlights Macdonald's qualms about "National Schools."

Macdonald demonstrated his support for the Prime Minister, but certainly at times appeared rather critical and skeptical of his party's policy. In February 1896, Macdonald had written Tupper, who was not yet Prime Minister. Macdonald said that he planned to endorse the party's position on education, because it was his responsibility to respect the wishes of the party. The fundamentals of democracy, Macdonald wrote to Tupper, were to ensure that votes were not whipped. "My dislike of public life and my dread of becoming a helpless parasite are as strong as ever, and I confess I shudder when I think of what is before me if I yield to your direction."<sup>31</sup> In other words, he said that he wants to represent himself when he votes in the legislature. Macdonald believed that, in order to work in a political party, he must be given an opportunity to present his political views to the cabinet in order to voice the concerns of his constituents. Macdonald indicated his reluctance to participate in federal politics, but would do so at the request of the party.

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 5476 – 5480.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 5476-5480.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 5476 – 5480.

Macdonald's views on the Manitoba School Question and deployment of public policy in favour of Manitoba show that he orchestrated his campaign issues to the pressures of the campaign. At the outset of the election period, Macdonald was at pains to emphasize that he was apprehensive about the national platform. "So far, I know you and I think alike, but from this point I fear our views differ so much so as to be almost irreconcilable for I do not consider that it is at all incumbent on the Gov't to re-establish Separate Schools."<sup>32</sup> Macdonald made it clear that the members of Parliament must rethink the federal override of the Manitoba School Act.

Macdonald was clear that education plagued provincial and federal political relations. He stated his understanding of the controversial issue of education to Charles Tupper. "I consider [Remedial Legislation] a curse to the country, and I look at the Remedial bill as a much dangerous measure which will throw Manitoba and the west into turmoil for years to come; it [the Remedial bill] will historically retard the progress of the country, and may sour and shake Confederation to its base."<sup>33</sup> He was arguing that the issue had been resolved for Manitobans by the provincial election of January 1896. The result had clearly demonstrated that Manitoba voters supported provincial rights and demanded the protection and preservation of the so-called National Schools. In other words, debating this issue at the federal level wasted the resources of the country and the federal government. It had already done a great deal of to "sour and shake" the federation and the Conservative party.

Yet Macdonald's interpretation of the School Question was at times contradictory. On 7 April 1896, Macdonald wrote to Tupper, "I am, as you know, in preference with the Government on their policy, and am perfectly ready to support those in their attempt to pass Remedial

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 5476 – 5480.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 5476 – 5480.

Legislation.”<sup>34</sup> But in a subsequent letter, he seemed utterly at odds with the federal Conservative party. He stated that the federal government had no right to interfere with a provincial matter. “I am afraid that I must acknowledge that the view of the School Question which you present so fully in it, namely the phase based upon the rights of the Roman Catholic Minority by treaty, does not affect me much as it perhaps ought to do.”<sup>35</sup>

Macdonald had indicated his private support for National Schools in some letters. He suggested that the constitution clearly entitled the Legislature to act alone on education. “My preference for National Schools is so strong,” he wrote to Tupper,

that I would be willing to take advantage, particularly as I believe that at the time you speak of no particular importance was attached by the Roman Catholics of Manitoba to their right as their minority to separate schools being preserved, as at that time it was a matter of doubt as to whether the Protestants or Roman Catholics would in the future form the majority of the population, and the French had great hopes of turning Manitoba into a French Province peopled by emigrants from Lower Canada.<sup>36</sup>

In this instance, Macdonald refers to the divisive and quite complex problem that rested on the responsibility of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. He argued that the Manitoba School Act was important to the province, as it was the general feeling that minorities were not entitled to their constitutional right and a grievance.<sup>37</sup> Later on, his campaign platform declared his intention to protect Franco-Manitobans access to education. Macdonald had recognised confirmed electoral support for National Schools throughout the regions of the province, but never endorsed it in any of his public statements at campaign rallies. In letters to Prime Minister Charles Tupper, he believed that it was wrong, if not political suicide, to disallow the National Schools Act of 1890, Macdonald suggested the idea that, “the outcomes from the recent elections

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<sup>34</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Tupper Papers*, Macdonald to Tupper, 7 April 1896, 5499.

<sup>35</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Tupper Papers*. Macdonald to Tupper, 15 April 1896, 5520 - 5523.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 5520 - 5523.

<sup>37</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Tupper Papers*. Macdonald to Tupper, 17 January 1896, 5344 - 5347.

show what a sweep the Greenway government has made, and I can assure you that includes the vast majority of those who supported Conservative candidates.”<sup>38</sup>

By the time of the federal election, Macdonald’s position on Remedial Legislation appeared enigmatic. In response to some of the political gossip in the Manitoba dailies, Macdonald on 16 June 1896 denied all allegations about his adoption of Wilfrid Laurier’s position on the National Schools and Laurier’s view on provincial rights. Yet, it should be noted that the two had virtually the same approach.

I stated in all my speeches in Winnipeg and elsewhere, and I never adopted Mr. Laurier’s policy which I consider absolutely absurd, as in my opinion, there is nothing to enquire into, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council having found that the fact that the system of Separate Schools which was introduced by the Act of 1871 was taken away by the School Act of 1890, constitutes a grievance under the Manitoba Act, and if a dozen Commissions of Enquiry were appointed they could find nothing but what we know already, and the time occupied by these Commissions, beyond making the enquires would be simply so much time lost.<sup>39</sup>

Actually, Macdonald believed that education was a provincial matter, as he indicated in the private letter to Archbishop Langevin of St. Boniface, in Manitoba.<sup>40</sup> The political partnership with Langevin was an important element for Macdonald and the Conservative party to gain the full support of French-Catholics in Manitoba.

Macdonald subtly altered his position to gain support from Archbishop Langevin. If Macdonald could promise to vote in favour of Remedial Legislation, he would rely on Langevin to rally votes for the Conservative party. If Parliament passed Remedial Legislation, the federal government was obligated to order Manitoba to restore Catholic schools in the province. In a private letter to Archbishop Langevin, Macdonald had clearly articulated that the matter should have been dealt at the provincial level of government. The Manitoba legislature, not the federal

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 5344 – 5347.

<sup>39</sup> Fonds Corporation archiépiscopale catholique romaine de Saint-Boniface. Série Langevin, Macdonald to Langevin, 16 June 1896, 5406 - 5407.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 5406 - 5407.

Parliament, was the authority on matters of education. In other words, Macdonald wrote that Manitoba Catholics were to appeal to Manitoba politicians to reconsider the National Schools Act.<sup>41</sup> He reiterated this position to the Archbishop in the same letter:

I believe this is a Question that ought to be settled by the Provincial Government, and if I am elected I shall use my best endeavours to have a settlement in conformity with the judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council effected in this way, as I believe it is in the interest of the Catholics themselves that legislation should come from the Provincial Legislature, who, in case of Dominion Legislation, will have it in their power to harass them for years by adopting obstructive tactics and appealing to the courts against the constitutionality of the various clauses of the Remedial Act.<sup>42</sup>

But Hugh John Macdonald also stated that, if the provincial government washed its hands of the Remedial order, then the federal government could have taken the responsibility to disallow the Manitoba School Act.

If the Provincial Government turns a deaf ear in the future as they have done in the past to the request that they should right the wrong done, then I am in favour of Remedial Legislation which will then become undoubted duty.<sup>43</sup>

Macdonald argued if Thomas Greenway and his government could not handle the responsibility of resolving the issue diplomatically by coming to an agreement with the French Catholics in Manitoba, then the federal government would be obligated to step in.

Why did Macdonald hold two separate positions on one particular issue, one for Tupper and the other for Langevin? Obviously he was not averse to winning French Catholic votes in Manitoba. He was prepared to form a vote-getting relationship with Langevin, explaining to the Bishop that,

I am aware that you require protection against the fanaticism of the Greenway Government, and this protection should be, and if I have my way, will be accorded to you.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 5406 - 5407.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 5406 - 5407.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 5406 - 5407.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 5406 - 5407.

During the campaign period, he openly championed the Remedial bill in his public speeches, but was strangely apprehensive in discussing the matter at public meetings.<sup>45</sup>

It must be emphasised that Macdonald was prepared to address other issues and that National Schools was not always or even usually at the centre of his political agenda. Other issues clearly boiled over in his political correspondence, chiefly the development and sustenance of the protective tariff and a new railway policy. The evidence suggests that Macdonald used his campaign rallies to voice his diverse platform to voters. In addition, his ability to form a political partnership with Archbishop Langevin for vote-getting purposes, while sustaining close ties with Tupper, suggests his determination to broker deals to win votes. It was the letters to Langevin that best illustrated Macdonald's aim to negotiate deals, favouring Remedial Legislation, in some circumstances, in exchange for voter support. Obviously, Macdonald recognised a potential anti-Catholic vote. By emphasising economic change through the railway, Hugh John Macdonald was signalling his support for a revised National Policy and "provincial rights" in the positive area of railway building and economic development.

The *Nor'Wester* gave the strong impression that voting for Conservative candidates meant that voters would receive far greater economic opportunity than in casting a vote in favour of the Liberal party. One of the more blatant political cartoons shows two families having dinner. The level of material wealth affects the emotional spirits at the dinner tables. In the upper drawing, "A happy home," all family members are wearing fine clothing, enjoying ample food, and residing in rich décor. In the lower cartoon, a family sits at of table in a bare room with caption stating "A Desolate Home." The family sits at a practically bare picnic table, while looking at a picnic basket marked "School Question."

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<sup>45</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Tupper Papers*. Macdonald to Tupper, 3 April 1896, 5476 – 5480.

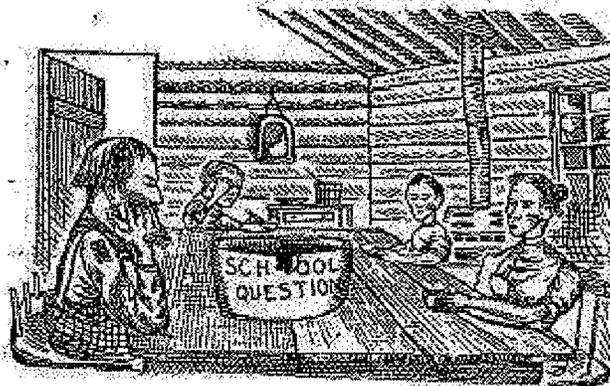
## VOTE FOR GOVERNMENT CANDIDATES.

Material Prosperity—A Happy Home—Plenty of Work, and a Loaded Table.



## VOTE FOR OPPOSITION.

A Destitute Home, and "School Question" Forage.



Source: *The Nor'Wester*, 16 June 1896, 1.

At the centre of the picnic table is a bowl apparently filled with porridge, an ethnic food associated with the Scots. In other words, the *Nor'Wester* claimed that it was more likely that the Scottish Protestants were more likely to be fixated upon the School Question. In the cartoon, the family solely devoted to the School Question, sacrifices the “material tranquillity” that would be secured by the Conservative party.

Nathaniel Boyd was the Conservative candidate for the riding of Macdonald. Boyd was an avid supporter of the protective tariff and the C.P.R. the latter perhaps a reflection of his long-time employment with the railway. He was born in Lachute, Canada East, in 1853. He attended elementary school in Ottawa, and became a telegraph operator in Ottawa. By the 1890s, he had

become the proprietor of a “bread making” business outlets on 370 and 579 Main Street in Winnipeg and a retail bakery company on Portage Avenue as well. On the election, Boyd contended that “the utter fallacy of the Liberals position on this issue [of the tariff]” showed that “farmers were fully protected in all they grow and lightly taxed on what they largely consume.”<sup>46</sup> Boyd made thirty-three public appearances throughout the campaign (see Appendix, Table 1). Boyd relied heavily on Hugh Sutherland and John A. Davidson, who were key civic leaders in Selkirk and Neepawa. Davidson was a merchant and politician, who was one of the stakeholders in establishing Neepawa by “building a store, hotel, flour mill, and blacksmith shop.”<sup>47</sup> These leaders spoke very strongly and at great length at numerous campaign rallies.<sup>48</sup>

The rural riding, of Macdonald contained the south-west corner of Manitoba. “Wheat growing was the all-absorbing economic interest of the constituency, as the rest of Manitoba,” noted Cooke, adding “there were a few flour mills, at such towns as Austin, Carberry, Holland, McGregor, and saw mills at Cypress River and Westbourne – brick making in Neepawa and a cheese factory at Popular Point.”<sup>49</sup> The riding was “not too badly served with railroads for the time. It was crossed twice in the south by the Canadian Pacific Railway, and a little farther north by the Manitoba and Northwestern Railway, while east of Portage la Prairie there was a branch of the North Pacific and Manitoba Railway.”<sup>50</sup> Macdonald was a growing constituency, the population of which increased 63% between 1891 and 1901.

Boyd’s campaigning strategy was similar to Hugh John Macdonald’s in that he held as many rallies as possible during the sixty day campaign period and relied on the support of his

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<sup>46</sup> “Macdonald,” 1 June 1896, *Daily Nor’Wester*, 5.

<sup>47</sup> J.M. Bumsted, “John Andrew Davidson,” *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 64.

<sup>48</sup> “Meeting at Cypress River,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 4 June 1896, 6; “Rutherford at Neepawa,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 10 June 1896, 1.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

campaign workers. In May 1896, Boyd held fifteen meetings or rallies (see Appendix, Table 1). At a campaign rally in Neepawa on 21 May, the Conservative association described the meeting as “intended in the first instance to be for organisation purposes.”<sup>51</sup> Also, his meetings were rowdy. At another rally in Gladstone on 12 June 1896, the *Manitoba Free Press* reported that “one of the largest and most enthusiastic meetings ever held here took place last night in the interests of Mr. Boyd.”<sup>52</sup> Boyd also stated that “when the hour of [the] meeting arrived, the hall was crowded to the doors by townspeople and farmers from the outlying districts, who had come through rain and mud to hear the rival candidates speak.”<sup>53</sup> Boyd talked about education. He argued that the failure to restore separate schools must fall on Parliament. “The federal Parliament must either do so or ignore the provisions in the constitution, and the judgment of the imperial Privy Council.”<sup>54</sup> He also noted that “he realised that his vote for the Remedial bill was an unpopular one, but in giving it as he did he acted conscientiously and patriotically and was quite prepared to take the consequences.”<sup>55</sup> The *Manitoba Free Press* reported that Boyd believed that it “was not a question of whether or not separate schools should be restored in Manitoba, but whether or not the constitution in its entirety should be maintained. [Boyd] held that the Roman Catholics have been granted separate schools and, that guarantee having been repudiated by the Manitoba legislature, a grievance existed and must be redressed.”<sup>56</sup>

By June 1896, Boyd had held eighteen meetings in an effort to persuade the electorate to vote Conservative. Making headlines across the province in the *Winnipeg Tribune*, *Manitoba Free Press*, and *Daily Nor'Wester*, Boyd had redoubled his efforts, organising a series of

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<sup>51</sup> “Boyd at Neepawa,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 23 May 1896, 2.

<sup>52</sup> “Macdonald Constituency,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 16 June 1896, 2.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

campaign meetings and rallies. At his first June rally, Boyd stated that the Liberals and the Patrons of Industry had unstable platforms, which could bring no serious benefit to Manitobans.

My opponents [Liberals and the Patrons of Industry] have a fragile platform, composed of three shaky planks, the school question, which as I said is played out; free trade as they have it in English, from which they back down in every way, and alleged scandals which they have not yet proven. They have nothing whatever to promise and no definite plan laid out.<sup>57</sup>

According to the *Daily Nor'Wester*, Boyd insisted that the education was not the most important issue during the campaign period, since many other political and economic issues had greater impact on Manitobans. Above all, Boyd emphasised that the very act of organising rallies would neutralise policy issues.

There is no doubt but that I will carry the constituency. We held seven meetings this past week and everyone was largely attended and great enthusiasm was manifested. One thing I was pleased to notice was that the electors are reading with the result that the school question as a vote-catching dodge is exploded.<sup>58</sup>

Boyd made it crystal clear that education was a crucial election issue to diminish. The *Nor'Wester* reported Boyd's glee as he made education seem less important than others in the campaign.

[Voters] realise that there are many more important matters before them. It was not infrequent that, when speakers commenced to say something regarding the school question, cries 'Oh, rats, talk about something else,' were heard from the audience.<sup>59</sup>

Boyd believed that Remedial Legislation had been put to rest with the election of Thomas Greenway and the Liberal government in Manitoba.<sup>60</sup> To Boyd, the protective tariff and the broad national policy were of far greater significance than any other issue in the campaign.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> "Macdonald," *Daily Nor'Wester*, 1 June 1896, 5.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

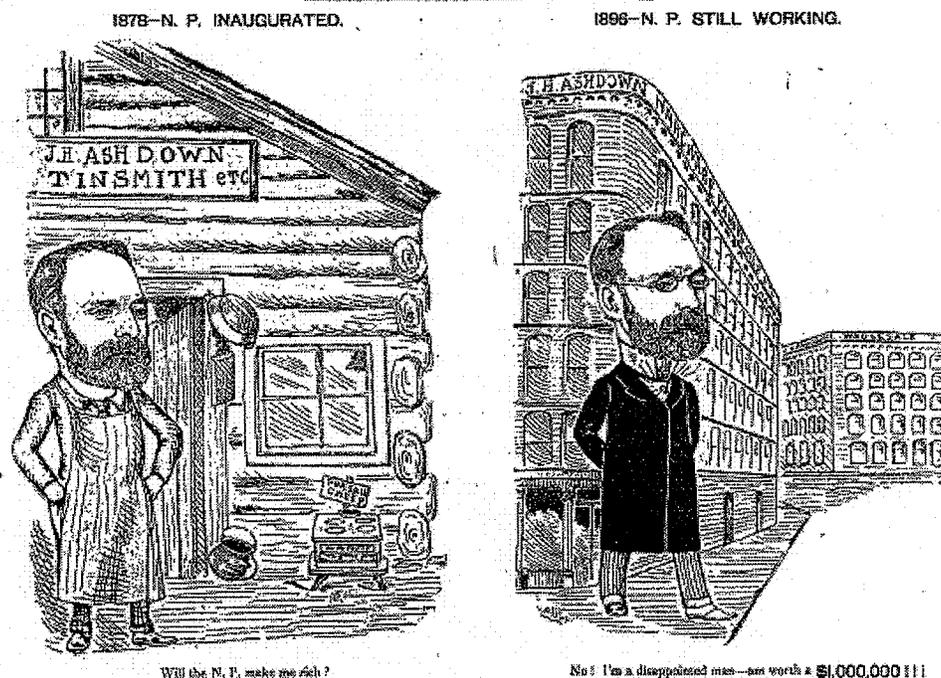
<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

The National Policy was an economic policy that had the potential to serve all Canadians, which the *Nor'Wester* claimed had helped increase everyone's prosperity, including Liberal candidate James Ashdown's net worth. The *Nor'Wester's* cartoonist illustrated the C.P.R. and the National Policy were the means to industrialise and modernise the west.

## NATIONAL POLICY ILLUSTRATED.



Source: *Daily Nor'Wester*, 6 June 1896, 1.

The political cartoon showed that although James Ashdown argued against the C.P.R. and its alleged monopoly, it was this economic enterprise that helped him become a successful entrepreneur. In the left side of the cartoon, Ashdown worked from a wooden log cabin, dressed in a shopkeeper's garb, including an apron when the railroad was "inaugurated." Approximately twenty years later, Ashdown is portrayed as a proprietor who has achieved great success. He is wearing a business-suit and long coat, glasses, and leather shoes, while his business consists of a magnificent brick warehouse set in an urban metropolis. Boyd appreciated the irony that Ashdown's success was largely a result of the very railway he criticized.

For Nathaniel Boyd, electioneering and campaign management were the keys to win. He argued that education was an issue, but just one of the many matters to be addressed by candidates. The protective tariff, railways, and provincial rights were other issues that required Boyd's attention. However, to win the race, Boyd had to meet and greet his voters. His attendance at campaign rallies were certainly met with great enthusiasm, as reported in the newspaper dailies in the province.

Alphonse Alfred LaRivière was the Conservative candidate in Provencher. He was born in Montreal, had received his education at Jacques Cartier Normal School and St. Mary's College in Montreal, and had a long career in business in Manitoba.<sup>62</sup> He was a rarity in 19<sup>th</sup> century Canada with both a college and a military education.<sup>63</sup> A. I. Silver argues that LaRivière worked hard to protect those involved in the 1869 -1870 Red River Rebellion by supporting the "efforts to obtain an amnesty for Louis Riel and other Métis who had participated in the 1869–70 Red River uprising and particularly in the killing of Thomas Scott."<sup>64</sup> By 1874, he had been appointed Justice of the Peace for Selkirk and served as St. Boniface M.L.A. between 1878 and 1879. By October 1881, "he had purchased Joseph Royal's *Le Métis* (which he would control until the end of 1897) and had changed its name to *Le Manitoba*, promising that it would be a "vigilant sentinel" protecting the rights of the "French" population."<sup>65</sup> By owning the newspaper, he was in a position to be one of Manitoba's major defenders of francophone Canadians. He later was elected M.P. in the federal by-election of 1889.<sup>66</sup> As a long serving representative for the riding, he formed relationships with leaders of the francophone Roman

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<sup>62</sup> J.M. Bumsted, "Alphonse Alfred LaRivière," *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography* (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 137.

<sup>63</sup> E. Cooke, "The Federal Election of 1896 in Manitoba", 79.

<sup>64</sup> A.I. Silver, "La Rivière, Alphonse-Alfred-Clément," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=42064&query=>, accessed 5 January 2006.

<sup>65</sup> A.I. Silver, "La Rivière, Alphonse-Alfred-Clément," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=42064&query=>, accessed 5 January 2006.

<sup>66</sup> J.M. Bumsted, "Alphonse Alfred LaRivière," 137.

Catholic community, especially with Archbishop Louis-Philippe-Alélard Langevin. Most importantly, LaRivière focussed on education and constitutional rights as main tools to garner votes in Provencher.

As a mixed urban and rural riding, Provencher had elements of both a growing urban centre and a heavy agricultural supplier of goods.<sup>67</sup> There was little newspaper writing about LaRivière's campaign meetings and strategies, even in *Le Manitoba*. Interestingly, LaRivière did not start his campaign until June. He stated, "J'ai l'intention d'être a St. Jean Baptiste dimanche prochain pour commencer par là ma compagne électorale."<sup>68</sup> He started significantly later than all other Conservative candidates in the province. Cooke argues that, "there is not a single description of a campaign meeting, and no account of how well the territory was covered by the candidates and their supporters."<sup>69</sup> LaRivière did, however, attend four public meetings during the sixty day campaign period (see Appendix, Table 1). It is interesting to note that campaigning and electioneering was not on his first on his list of priorities.

LaRivière relied on his community involvement as a sitting Member of Parliament, editor of *Le Manitoba*, and civic leader. "It is evident that Mr. LaRivière, on the basis of his race and religion, his community work, his ability, his previous successes in the constituency, and his prestige, was at considerable advantage over Mr. Walton (his Liberal opponent in Provencher)."<sup>70</sup> George Walton was his primary opponent and the Liberal candidate for Provencher. Little was documented about the LaRivière's campaign other than the fact that he

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<sup>67</sup> In 1896, its four dominant religious groups were Roman Catholic at 47%, Mennonite at 17%, Presbyterian at 8.2%, and Anglican at 6%. A majority of the constituents were of French origin, while groups were of German or British descent. Nevertheless, Provencher was a growing constituency, which had increased approximately 60% between 1891 and 1901.

<sup>68</sup> Fonds Corporation archiépiscopale catholique romaine de Saint-Boniface. Série Langevin, A. A. C. LaRivière to Langevin, 10 June 1896. "I have the intentions of being in St. Jean Baptiste next Sunday to start there my electoral campaign."

<sup>69</sup> E. Cooke, "The Federal Election of 1896 in Manitoba", 83.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

made the four appearances. In a private letter to the Archbishop, LaRivière stated, “Vous serez étonné d’apprendre Monseigneur, que certain nombre de nos canadiens vont voter pour Walton, car dissent-ils, en votant pour lui ils contribuent au succès de M. Laurier. La masse des métis en fera autant.”<sup>71</sup> To LaRivière, effective campaign management meant easing the anxieties of the Archbishop, who promised votes if the Conservative party secured Remedial Legislation. The relationship between LaRivière and Langevin were clearly connected to their ethnicity and their religion.

LaRivière firmly stated his stance on partisan issues. On 3 June, LaRivière observed that the Patrons of Industry were unable to work with the Conservatives on the issue of education.<sup>72</sup> “Mons. Macdonald, le candidat mentionné dans cette lettre, est le vieillard que nous avons rencontré dans ma chambre, à Ottawa. Il a voté pour le Bill, c’est pourquoi on lui fait la guerre aujourd’hui. Son adversaire est un Ministre protestant qui se présente une qualité de Patron de l’Industrie et je me puis comprendre comment il pouvait/pourrait recevoir l’appui de nos amis là-bas.”<sup>73</sup> LaRivière asserted that the Patrons were against Remedial Legislation. In suggesting that the political platforms of the Patrons and the Conservative parties were at odds, LaRivière signaled that the Patrons of Industry and Conservatives could not work together on any political issue related to the provocative issue of education.

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<sup>71</sup> Fonds Corporation archiépiscopale catholique romaine de Saint-Boniface. Série Langevin, A. A. C. LaRivière to Langevin, 10 June 1896. “*You would be surprised to find out Monseigneur, that a certain number of our Canadians will vote for Walton, for they say, that by voting for him, they are contributing to the success of M. Laurier. A majority of the Métis will as well.*”

<sup>72</sup> Fonds Corporation archiépiscopale catholique romaine de Saint-Boniface. Série Langevin, A. A. C. LaRivière to Langevin, 3 June 1896.

<sup>73</sup> Fonds Corporation archiépiscopale catholique romaine de Saint-Boniface. Série Langevin, A. A. C. LaRivière to Langevin, 3 June 1896. “*Monseigneur Macdonald, the candidate mentioned in this letter is the elderly man that we have met in my office in Ottawa. He voted for the Bill and this is why we are battling him today. His adversary is a Protestant Minister who represents a characteristic of the Patron of Industry and this is why I cannot understand how he could receive the cooperation of our friends over there.*”

LaRivière and Senator Bernier stated that Catholics had been stripped of their constitutional rights. In a private letter to Langevin written (in English) by LaRivière and Senator T. A. Bernier, they argued that government policy should revolve around the restoration of Catholic Schools. "For the last five years, the Catholics of Manitoba have been subjected to a most unfair and unjust treatment of endurance, they have persistently but at the same time calmly and constitutionally claimed for redress."<sup>74</sup> Along with Bernier, LaRivière felt that Catholics in the province were the disenfranchised minority, stressing that Manitoba Catholics must be given the constitutional right assured to them in the B.N.A. Act.

That endurance and that considerate action on our part should be taken into consideration, and now that the Privy Council has empathically and clearly established our rights, now that the local Government and the Legislature of Manitoba have declared their intention of not acceding to the Remedial order served upon them, it seems to use that Remedial Legislation should follow at once.<sup>75</sup>

LaRivière firmly believed that Remedial Legislation was an appropriate method to restore justice in Manitoba. With such a guarantee, the Catholics were to be assured their protection under the spirit and intent of the Fathers of Confederation.

LaRivière made it clear that only Conservatives could best serve the interests of French Catholics in Canada. In his mind, LaRivière suspected that the Manitoba Liberals and McCarthyite League formed a political alliance based on provincial rights. "Nous avons besoins de toutes les adhésions possibles de chez nous, car leur prétention est que la loi proposée par le gouvernement n'est pas bonne et qu'elle ne sera pas acceptée par la population catholique du Manitoba."<sup>76</sup> LaRivière reaffirmed the notion that D'Alton McCarthy and the federal Liberals

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<sup>74</sup> Fonds Corporation archiépiscopale catholique romaine de Saint-Boniface. Série Langevin, Bernier and A. A. C. LaRivière to Langevin, 6 July 1895, L62386 - L62388.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, L62386 - L62388.

<sup>76</sup> Fonds Corporation archiépiscopale catholique romaine de Saint-Boniface. Série Langevin, A. A. C. LaRivière to Langevin, 15 February 1896. "*We need all the support we can get from our own people, because their*

had formed a political partnership designed to counter the Macdonald-Cartier vision of the founding fathers of Confederation. This theme was noted throughout the *Nor'Wester*. This union, as LaRivière had indicated, aimed to redefine federal-provincial relations and the interpretation of section 91 and 92 of the B.N.A. Act.

LaRivière wrote to Langevin pointing out that Conservatives were initially hesitant to support Remedial Legislation. They had recognised that members within their own party felt that the B.N.A. Act guaranteed exclusive powers to the Manitoba Legislature, specifically Section 93, "in and for each Province the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education."<sup>77</sup> He also realised that any measure to undermine provincial powers would not receive support from several influential Conservative party members. He argued, "le gouvernement est déterminé de pousser les choix aux vigueurs ; ou a partagé la loi en trois parties, lesquelles devrait faire les frais d'une séances nous pourrions la loi un comité de la chambre, c'est à dire nous pouvons en finir cette semaine si l'opposition n'y met pas trop d'abstrais."<sup>78</sup> He meant the Conservative party was prepared to resolve the language issue, but understood that opposition parties disagreed. At the same time, pushing for this federal Bill might jeopardise a great number of Conservatives in Manitoba. In other words, LaRivière asserted that campaign management was fundamental to his campaign to win votes. His professional and political relationship with Archbishop Langevin, an established trust, was LaRivière's major hope for victory. For LaRivière, the issue of primary importance was in fact education, but electoral success was still a matter of electoral tactics.

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*claim is that the proposed law is not a good one and that it will not be accepted by the Catholic population of Manitoba.*"

<sup>77</sup> *British North America Act, 1867.*

<sup>78</sup> Fonds Corporation archiépiscopale catholique romaine de Saint-Boniface. Série Langevin, A. A. C. LaRivière to Langevin, 30 March 1896. "*the government is determined to push what is already in use; or to share the law in three parts, which should call a meeting, we could pass the law in parliament that means we could finish this week if the opposition does not make too many amendments.*"

W.A. Macdonald and Dr. William James Roche were the two Conservative candidates who did not support the party's position on the issue of education. It must be noted that on other election issues, both W.A. Macdonald and Roche followed the Conservative party platform.<sup>79</sup> With the help of their organisers and mutual cooperation as a cohesive team to canvass votes in their constituencies, both W.A. Macdonald and Roche counted on their unique position on education to secure votes and win public trust. Despite their disagreement with the Conservative Party, the two candidates remained loyal to all other Conservative to government policies and initiatives. Still, it was their ability to convince the voters with face to face contact that was of extremely great importance rather than their position on Remedial Legislation alone.

During the campaign, Macdonald held thirty-two campaign meetings and rallies (see Appendix, Table 1). A Brandon lawyer and foe of Clifford Sifton, Macdonald was the vice-president of the Conservative party in Brandon. During the election campaign, he relied heavily on J. H. Agnew of Virden, President of the local Conservative Association, to help organise rallies during the campaign period.<sup>80</sup> Agnew would introduce Macdonald at public events, and was mentioned in public meetings.

As a predominantly agricultural riding, Brandon was a growing economic centre based upon its heavy agricultural base.<sup>81</sup> "Economically, the riding was given over almost entirely to wheat raising. In 1891, there had been 232 small manufacturing establishments in the whole of the old riding of Selkirk. These were all based on the agricultural production of the constituency,

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<sup>79</sup> "W.A. Macdonald," *Brandon Weekly Sun*, 28 May 1896, 1.

<sup>80</sup> "Brandon Contest," *Manitoba Free Press*, 19 May 1896, 1; "The Convention," *Manitoba Free Press*, 9 May 1896, 6.

<sup>81</sup> In 1896, its four dominant religious groups were Presbyterian (35%), Methodist (32%), Anglican (18%), and Roman Catholic (5%). A majority of the constituents were of British, German, or French origin. Approximately 78% of the constituency could read and write, while 8% could neither read and write.

and far removed from the exporting concerns to be found in the industrial area.”<sup>82</sup> It was reported that Macdonald was an ardent supporter of the National Policy and National Schools.<sup>83</sup>

W.A. Macdonald’s anti-remedial stance made him an interesting Conservative candidate. What would motivate him to break away from his political party? Brandon was the centre of the original “National Schools” sentiment, a favoured turf of the crusading D’Alton McCarthy, and the provincial rights, provincial-Liberal Clifford Sifton.



Source: *Manitoba Free Press*, 23 May 1896, 2.

In a campaign speech on 28 May, Macdonald argued that he would “vote against the remedial bill if elected.”<sup>84</sup> In the *Brandon Daily Sun*, an editorial noted that Macdonald would, “make again the same pledge he made there, and should a remedial bill be brought in, he would vote against the government.”<sup>85</sup> On 2 June at Elkhorn, Manitoba, Macdonald spoke for nearly two hours to “impress the audience,”<sup>86</sup> or so stated the then pro-remedial legislation *Manitoba Free Press*. The report stated that the hall was crowded and Macdonald had the attention of those in

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<sup>82</sup> Cooke, 56.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>84</sup> “W.A. Macdonald,” *Brandon Weekly Sun*, 28 May 1896, 1.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 1

<sup>86</sup> “W.A. Macdonald at Elkhorn,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 4 June 1896, 1.

attendance.<sup>87</sup> It appears that W. A. Macdonald had emphasised campaign management over election issues for the riding of Brandon, since little was mentioned more about his position on National Schools.

Much more was documented about his stance on railway building than on anti-Remedial Legislation. On 30 April at the City Hall in Brandon, the room was described as extremely crowded.<sup>88</sup> The report indicated that Macdonald was firm on his position that a railroads should be built to Neepawa or Arden. Moreover, this new railroad, “would meet the views of a large portion of the country.”<sup>89</sup> The *Brandon Weekly Sun* noted that Macdonald also “stood by the National Policy, and believed that it existed for the benefit of the Dominion.”<sup>90</sup> Macdonald firmly believed that the farmers would benefit from the National Policy as it would help market the “existing duty on wheat” as in the harvest in being so much would “fill up the eastern markets (the millers of Ontario).”<sup>91</sup> The *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that 18 May 1896 was when Macdonald went to Virden to address his first official public meeting, which was well-attended.<sup>92</sup> He received a standing ovation.<sup>93</sup> At this meeting, C. C. Cliffe, a McCarthy supporter according to the *Manitoba Free Press* reported, had “half an hour given to him in which, he made the best of his time for Mr. D’Alton McCarthy.”<sup>94</sup> The *Free Press* reported that during Cliffe’s address, “he referred to John A. Macdonald as a progressive statesmen and a greater leader, but had but little respect for the Tupperts.”<sup>95</sup> Several days later on 22 May, W.A. Macdonald campaigned at “Argue Orange Hall approximately fourteen miles south of the town

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>88</sup> “Enthusiastic Mass Meeting,” *Brandon Weekly Sun*, 30 April 1896, 1.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>90</sup> “W.A. Macdonald,” *Brandon Weekly Sun*, 28 May 1896, 1.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>92</sup> “Brandon Contest,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 19 May 1896, 1.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>94</sup> “Meeting at Melita,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 21 May 1896, 2.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

of Souris.”<sup>96</sup> At this meeting, the *Manitoba Free Press* claimed many farmers were too busy seeding to witness the meeting.<sup>97</sup>

W.A. Macdonald worked hard during the campaign period. Thirty-two public appearances were much above the average number of eighteen campaign rallies held by candidates throughout Manitoba. His level of activity shows that Macdonald worked hard to muster and coordinate support in his constituency (see Appendix, Table 1). For example, on 8 June Macdonald held a meeting in Rounthwaite. The *Manitoba Free Press* reported that “a political meeting in the interests of Mr. W.A. Macdonald was held here tonight, at which quite a number of farmers attended.”<sup>98</sup> At the rally, Macdonald made it clear that he refused to toe the Conservative party line on the issue of education. But, this was not all he spoke about. On 11 June in Hartney, the *Manitoba Free Press* also reported that his meeting was well-attended.<sup>99</sup> At this meeting, many of his supporters, such as Mr. Drew, who spoke for forty-five minutes, discussed the Hudson’s Bay Railway and the National Policy. Macdonald argued that the improvements in the dairy industry were intrinsically linked to the Conservative party’s policy on the protective tariff.<sup>100</sup> Therefore to win, Macdonald argued, he had to first represent and appeal to the local interests of the constituents.

Dr. William James Roche, the Conservative candidate for Marquette, joined W.A. Macdonald in refusing to toe the party line on education (see Appendix, Table 1). He was born at Clandeboye, Manitoba in 1883. He attended schools at Lucan and London, Ontario, and

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<sup>96</sup> “W.A. Macdonald at Souris,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 23 May 1896, 1.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>98</sup> “A Rounthwaite Meeting,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 12 June 1896, 3.

<sup>99</sup> “Meeting at Hartney,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 12 June 1896, 3.

<sup>100</sup> “W.A. Macdonald,” *Brandon Weekly Sun*, 28 May 1896, 1.

received an education at Trinity Medical College and the University of Western Ontario.<sup>101</sup> He practiced medicine at Minnedosa, Manitoba. Roche ended up having a long career in federal politics including serving in the Conservative cabinet of Robert Borden after 1911. Roche believed that National Schools must remain in Manitoba. He stated, "I am a firm believer of National Schools, am opposed to the restoration of Separate Schools."<sup>102</sup> He went on to suggest that the Remedial bill must never again be presented to the House of Commons in any way shape or form.<sup>103</sup> On 12 June 1896, he stated again at a public meeting that he denounced separate schools, confirming that it was the province's right to make decisions that regarded their own destiny.<sup>104</sup> Obviously an election tactic to win a seat at the federal legislature, Roche believed that he must first represent the local interests of his constituency. Even more so, Roche had to abandon the Conservative plan on Remedial Legislation in Manitoba to win.

As a rural riding, Marquette constituted the North-west corner of Manitoba.<sup>105</sup> "Economically, the riding produced almost wheat exclusively 1896. Rapid City had flour, saw, and woollen mills, and there were also flour mills in Birtle and Minnedosa."<sup>106</sup> Education was not the only issue that Roche focussed his election campaign. Roche promised to fund "experimental farms, Dairy Industries, and protecting Canadian herds from disease."<sup>107</sup> He committed himself to a Manitoba and North West Railroad Company "to Prince Albert."<sup>108</sup> Roche also championed a better Mail Service to those living in the western portion of the

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<sup>101</sup> J.K. Johnson, "Hon. William James Roche," *The Canadian Directory of Parliament, 1867-1967*, (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1968), 501.

<sup>102</sup> "To the electors of the Riding of Marquette," *Minnedosa Tribune*, 14 May 1896, 2.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>104</sup> "Marquette," *Daily Nor'Wester*, 12 June 1896, 5.

<sup>105</sup> The four dominant religious groups were Anglican (18.5%), Presbyterian (33%), Methodist (28%), and Roman Catholic (8%). A majority of the constituents were of British origin, while others were of German, French, or Scandinavian descent. Approximately 67% of the constituency could read and write. Marquette was Manitoba's fastest growing constituency, which had increased 159% in size between 1891 and 1901.

<sup>106</sup> E. Cooke, "The Federal Election of 1896 in Manitoba", 137.

<sup>107</sup> "To the electors of the Riding of Marquette," *Minnedosa Tribune*, 14 May 1896, 2.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

Constituency”<sup>109</sup> Roche claimed that he would work to implement a new judicial division in response to increase in population of the Western Prairie.<sup>110</sup> He argued that “travelling so far to attend court, and the large amount of expense by way of bailiff’s fees and mileage.”<sup>111</sup> It was an inconvenience to citizens travel, an inefficient system, which had to be corrected.

Roche proposed negotiating “‘preferential trade’ between Great Britain and her colonies.”<sup>112</sup> He said that the threat of war has struck fear amongst many people, thus requiring the need for closer economic ties with the Mother Country.<sup>113</sup> With a series of election issues important to Roche’s campaign, it was evident that Remedial Legislation was one of several planks that comprised his election platform. To Roche, campaigning on election issues was a way to increase voter awareness, but not the most practical method to acquire votes.

Roche recruited many people with his campaign in an effort to win. Roche relied heavily on the support of Glen Campbell, the vice-president of the Conservative party in Marquette, to help organise his campaign.<sup>114</sup> Campbell introduced the candidate at campaign meetings and chaired meetings at the local constituency council meeting. On 15 May in Minnedosa, the *Winnipeg Tribune* noted that Roche held a campaign meeting with running mate W.A. Macdonald, who argued that they “can better represent the farmers and their interests.”<sup>115</sup> Several days later, on 7 June 1896 in Rapid City, “Dr. Roche held a public meeting here Saturday night was well attended.”<sup>116</sup> The *Manitoba Free Press* reported that Roche was “repeatedly interrupted by questions from opponents on the platform and in the audience on

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<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>114</sup> “The Convention,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 9 May 1896, 6.

<sup>115</sup> “Politics in the West,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 16 May 1896, 1.

<sup>116</sup> “Roche at Rapid City,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 11 June 1896, 2.

every instance, but was able to give quick, concise, and convincing replies.”<sup>117</sup> At this meeting, the *Winnipeg Tribune* noted that he talked solely about his reluctance to accept the Conservative policy on the issue of Remedial Legislation.

### **Conclusion**

The Manitoba Conservative party had a very tough political fight in 1896. Since Manitoba had voted Liberal in the provincial election in January, the Conservative candidates and their organisers had to convince voters of the need to support a party in Ottawa that apparently opposed a popular provincial party. This chapter has shown that Conservative candidates devised positions on a range of economic and political or constitutional issues. Even more important was the political relationship that candidates shared with their organisers and campaign supporters. Most Manitoba Conservative candidates not only spoke to the social and economic concerns of the province, through a revised National Policy, but also argued that education was not the most critical election issue in the election. Education certainly was one of the campaign issues, but it also divided the Conservative party into two distinct camps. Despite the fact that W.A. Macdonald and Dr. Roche refusal to support the party on the issue of education, the other Manitoba Conservative candidates appeared to support Prime Minister Charles Tupper. It was only W.A. Macdonald and Roche who saw that it was in their personal electoral interest to object to their party's platform.

Toeing the line is still almost an essential practice in contemporary Canadian politics. Former M.P. Carolyn Parrish of Paul Martin's Liberal government argued that toeing the line, at least in public, was an essential characteristic for an M.P. who wants to be effective and gain promotion to cabinet. She said that, “you can fight all you want in caucus behind closed doors,

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<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

but you go in there [the House of Commons] and vote like automatons.”<sup>118</sup> The *Globe and Mail* explained that Prime Minister Paul Martin fired Parrish when she “stomped on a George W. Bush doll on national television.”<sup>119</sup> As this thesis shows, party discipline and toeing the line is an old problem in the Parliamentary system, and has yet to be resolved. Freedom of speech is not tolerated for a cabinet minister or usually for an M.P.

The chapter also demonstrates that all Conservative candidates held rallies and meetings as part and parcel of their formula for electioneering. Hugh John Macdonald and Alphonse LaRivière formed a special political relationship with Langevin to increase voter support. Campaign rallies were also important, if not instrumental to the Conservative victory in the province, but not for LaRivière. Needless to say, most candidates in the 1896 election contest appeared to have relied heavily on their campaign organisers and their friends. Along with the help of their campaign organisers, Manitoba Conservatives addressed government initiatives and recommendations that varied on education, the National Policy, protectionism, freight rates, prohibition, trade monopolies, and freer trade within the Empire and with the United States. Education was not the hot-button issue to the Manitoba Conservative candidates.

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<sup>118</sup> “Outspoken ex-MP seeks council seat in Mississauga,” *The Globe and Mail*, 30 January 2006, A9.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, A9.

### **CHAPTER III: The Opposition Liberal Campaign**

The Liberal Party in Manitoba had only emerged in the mid 1880s as a result of Thomas Greenway's political skills and ambitions.<sup>1</sup> The provincial Liberals became successful at the same time that the national party was being remade by Wilfrid Laurier. Succeeding to the federal Liberal leadership of Edward Blake in 1887, Laurier took some time to reorganize and revitalize a party that had been put out of power in 1878 and limited by economic and religious dogmatism. By 1896, Laurier's party had turned to recruit prominent provincial politicians and to blunt the Party's policies of the tariff reform, provincial rights, and limited government. When Prime Minister Charles Tupper dissolved the federal government on 24 April 1896, Laurier had worked hard to avoid decisive policy stances on such issues as tariff reform and the schools question.

In Manitoba, many of the Liberal candidates formed strategic alliances, partnerships, and personal relationships with other political parties and members, notably D'Alton McCarthy and members of the Patrons of Industry. This chapter concentrates on Liberal strategy with three specific goals. The first is to highlight the political issues the Manitoba Liberal candidates used to distinguish themselves. The second is to examine whether education or some other salient election issue was more important to the Liberal candidates. Third, it assesses the role campaign management played during the sixty-day campaign.

#### **The Liberal Party in the Federal Election of 1896**

The Federal Liberals had held a national political party policy convention in June 1893. It was not a leadership convention, but rather a means to draw upon broader participation than

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<sup>1</sup> James Mochoruk, "Thomas Greenway" in B. Ferguson & R. Wardhaugh, editors, *The Premiers of Manitoba*, Forthcoming.

the traditional elite politics allowed.<sup>2</sup> As political scientist John Lederle explained, “while the 1893 convention did not undertake the primary task of the modern convention, that of selecting a national party leader, it did draft a national platform.”<sup>3</sup> The Liberals organized party policy around the decentralisation of federal responsibilities and the rollback of the protective tariff, which they believed was in the best economic interests of Western Canadian, Ontario farmers, and Québec and Ontario entrepreneurs. As historian Paul Stevens has argued, Laurier led the Liberal party by advocating “a position consistent with the principles of provincial rights and non-denominational schools, the twin pillars of Ontario Liberalism for over two generations.”<sup>4</sup> But Laurier did not pursue these policies aggressively. The *Winnipeg Tribune* was virtually the voice of the Liberal party in the mid 1890s. It helped advocate the economic initiatives that Wilfrid Laurier and his party planned to implement. The *Toronto Globe* and the *Winnipeg Tribune* satirised the Liberal Party platform in a particularly effective caricature:

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<sup>2</sup> John Courtney, *Elections*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004); John W. Lederle, “The Liberal Convention of 1893,” *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* 16: 1 (1950), 43.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>4</sup> Paul D. Stevens, “Laurier, Aylesworth, and the Decline of the Liberal Party in Ontario,” *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers* (1968), 95.



Source: *Winnipeg Tribune*, 15 June 1896, 1.

The cartoon illustrates the dominant themes that the Liberal party used to characterise the Conservatives. The Tories were symbolised by the pig, which implied both sloth and filth. Above all, the pig represented the Tories feeding upon the public trough. The Tories had failed to deal with a growing public debt, had backed the railway monopoly in the hands of the Pacific Railway, and had supported high tariffs paid by western farmers. The Liberals, depicted here as working farmers, would clean up government by slaying the Tory pig. More broadly, the Liberals promised to restore the relationship between French and English Canadians and to end the scandal and corruption that characterised the Conservative regime.<sup>5</sup>

### Manitoba Liberal Candidates in the Federal Election of 1896

The Manitoba Liberal candidates advocated issues which embraced party politics, including provincial rights, anti-protectionism, financial accountability, and a plan for railway

<sup>5</sup> Blair Neatby, *Laurier and a Liberal Québec: A Study in Political Management*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973).

expansion. The Liberals engineered their platform to be, as the *Brandon Sun* put it, “wide enough and broad enough to hold all independent men of whatever rank, nationality, or creed.”<sup>6</sup> However, this chapter demonstrates that issues were tools used to increase voter awareness and to provide advantage in the internal conflict among Liberals. For the fact was that the Manitoba Liberal party was split over personal and policy rivalries marked by infighting and disagreements between Joseph Martin and Robert L. Richardson on one side and Thomas Greenway and Clifford Sifton on the other. These groups of individuals formed divisive camps that argued amongst themselves for dominance over the Liberal party in Manitoba. The journalist John W. Dafoe wrote that, “Richardson took a line which was effective in spreading dissension among the [Manitoba] Liberals.”<sup>7</sup> This line created a division at the provincial level, and created two cadres within the Liberal party. This division almost tore apart the party.<sup>8</sup> At the provincial level, James Mochoruk argues that Joseph Martin, “with his propensity for lawsuit, had become more of a liability than an asset to Greenway.”<sup>9</sup> Due to this critical internal conflict, the Manitoba Liberals struggled to organise a unified front during the campaign period. According to historian David Hall, in order to unseat the Conservatives, Manitoba Liberals tried “to cooperate with minor third parties, such as the Patrons of Industry and the so-called McCarthyites.”<sup>10</sup> Collaboration between these groups would have assured victory, especially in rural constituencies where the swing vote was so important.

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<sup>6</sup> “Speers Voluntarily Withdraws in Favour of National Schools,” *Brandon Sun*, 21 May 1896, 1.

<sup>7</sup> John W. Dafoe, *Clifford Sifton: In Relations to his Times*, (Toronto: MacMillan Company, 1931), 199.

<sup>8</sup> Jim Mochoruk, “Thomas Greenway and the Struggle for Provincial Rights,” Unpublished Paper, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>10</sup> David Hall, “T.O Davis, and Federal Politics in Saskatchewan, 1896,” *Saskatchewan History* 30 (1977), 56-62.

In 1896, the Liberals continued to cite the five policy objectives that had been declared in the 1893 convention – a “red book” of the times.<sup>11</sup> The first objective was freer trade with the United States. Free trade had the support of all Manitoban politicians, including Clifford Sifton and Joseph Martin, who agreed that the customs tariff of the Dominion should not be rooted in the protective principle, but rather on the doctrine of *laissez faire*. The Liberals promoted and embraced an economic plan that allowed market forces to dictate the cost of goods rather than duties levied on products that travelled across the monopoly C.P.R.<sup>12</sup> Manitoba Liberals suggested that a great number of Canadians actually wanted the Dominion government to relieve this burden on consumers in order to stimulate domestic and foreign trade with other nations, especially with the United States.<sup>13</sup> The 1895 version of the Liberal platform clearly stated that “the customs tariff of the Dominion should be based, not as it is now, upon the protective principle, but upon the requirements of the public service.”<sup>14</sup> This was a careful revision of the free trade principle Liberals had unsuccessfully pressed for three decades. Manitoba Liberals therefore pushed Laurier to seek to reconfigure the tariff, which had strained the economic freedom of farmers and businesses of the western prairie. The Liberals candidates promised that they would continue to press Eastern Canadians to seek negotiations with United States to ensure that the western farmers received fair and equal treatment in compromise to tariff protection.<sup>15</sup>

The second campaign issue for Liberal candidates was to expand trade not only with Britain, but with the United States. In doing so, Liberals believed that it was in the interests of

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<sup>11</sup> “Liberal Platform: Resolutions Adopted by the National Liberal Convention, Ottawa, June, 1893,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 May 1896, 3.

<sup>12</sup> D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900, Vol. 1* (Vancouver and London: University of British Columbia Press, 1981), 20, 29.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Platform of the Liberal Party of Canada*, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, 1895, 1.

<sup>15</sup> “Liberal Platform: Resolutions Adopted by the National Liberal Convention, Ottawa, June, 1893,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 May 1896, 3.

the Canada and the British Empire to develop trade with the United States, especially in the area of natural resources.<sup>16</sup> This policy certainly aimed to benefit Western farmers.

The third campaign issue was to break the Canadian Pacific Railway monopoly. The Liberals advocated the construction of railway lines that headed south to the United States, a long standing policy of the Provincial Liberals. New railways lines would allow farmers in Manitoba to trade with the United States rather than to absorb prices levied by shipping with the Canadian Pacific Railway. The Liberals in Manitoba, spearheaded a national campaign on provincial rights.

Liberal candidates advocated the protection of provincial constitutional rights in section 92 of the British North America Act. They argued that powers assigned to the provincial legislatures had been encroached by the federal government, particularly by the remedial bill. In doing so, Manitoba Liberals pledged to sustain and uphold the Manitoba School Act of 1890.<sup>17</sup> Clifford Sifton, M.L.A. for Brandon, who became *de facto* premier of Manitoba due to Greenway's ill-health during the mid-nineties, published a report in 1896 stating that National Schools had improved the quality of education in the province.<sup>18</sup> In 1889, Sifton had argued that students in Roman Catholic schools were several years behind in education compared to students enrolled the public school system.<sup>19</sup> It was at this time that Sifton and other Liberal politicians, especially Joseph Martin, believed that education had transcended other social and political issues in Manitoba. These issues related to the interpretation of the Constitution implied that electors in Manitoba had to decide whether to accept the intervention ("coercion") proposed by

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>17</sup> "The Record of the Government," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 3 January 1896, 6.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

the Conservative federal government or to adopt the respect for provincial rights suggested by the Liberal party.

The fifth objective of the Liberal party was greater fiscal responsibility through more efficient and honest management. Liberals alleged that Charles Tupper and the Conservatives had grossly misspent federal funds. The platform argued that scandal and corruption had become synonymous with the Conservative party. The Liberals stated that the Prime Minister, the Conservative party, and their colleagues used large contributions of public money for election purposes, to the extent that railway companies sponsored Conservative political candidates. The Liberal platform also claimed that the Conservatives had "accepted very large contributions of money for election purposes from funds of a railway company"<sup>20</sup> More generally, Liberals claimed that "the Government which profited political by these expenditures of public moneys of which the people have been defrauded, and which nevertheless, have never punished the guilty parties, must be held responsible for the wrong doings."<sup>21</sup>

The campaign of four Manitoba Liberal candidates in the federal election of 1896, James H. Ashdown, J. Alexander Macdonnell, Joseph Martin, and Robert L. Richardson, will be examined closely since their campaigns are documented most fully and they reflect internal party debates as well.

James H. Ashdown, although a Winnipeg resident, was the Liberal candidate for the riding of Marquette. His campaign carefully ran on the Liberal election issues of provincial rights, the southern expansion of railroads, the tariff, and an end to Conservative corruption.<sup>22</sup> He was a high profile candidate in Manitoba, a prominent and popular businessman, financier,

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>21</sup> *Platform of the Liberal Party of Canada*, (Steam Printer: Queen Street, 1895), 5.

<sup>22</sup> *Winnipeg Tribune, Manitoba Free Press, The Birtle Eye-Witness, Daily Nor'Wester, and Brandon Weekly Sun.*

and civic leader in Manitoba. Ashdown was born in London, England, but in 1852 at age eight he immigrated to Canada with his parents.<sup>23</sup> David Burley's entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* stated that Ashdown's business flourished by "meeting the growing demands of newcomers for stoves, stove-pipes, metal roofing, and all varieties of tinware and hardware."<sup>24</sup> He lived at 135 James Street, while his stores were located at 476 and 478 Main Street. His career in politics had been linked to his business interests in the province. As a member of the Winnipeg City Council in 1874 and 1879, Ashdown was "active on the Winnipeg Board of Trade from its founding in 1879."<sup>25</sup> As its president in 1887, he prepared pamphlets that criticised the monopoly of the Canadian Pacific Railway and denounced the government of Sir John A. Macdonald.<sup>26</sup>

At age 52, Ashdown entered federal politics by echoing the Liberal policy on the issues announced at the Liberal Convention of 1893. Burley's *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* entry on Ashdown notes that "he continued his opposition to the Canadian Pacific Railway, carrying the board of trade's complaints about rates to the railway committee in 1894."<sup>27</sup> Ashdown was part of the Joseph Martin/Robert Richardson camp of the Manitoba Liberal party. Throughout the campaign, Ashdown attended thirty-one campaign rallies during the sixty-day campaign in a rural riding. This meant that he travelled extensively by horse and buggy to visit constituents in the heavily-rural riding (see Appendix, Table 1).

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<sup>23</sup> J.M. Bumsted, "J.H. Ashdown" *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, 10.

<sup>24</sup> David Burley, "Ashdown, James Henry," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41922&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>25</sup> David Burley, "Ashdown, James Henry," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41922&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>26</sup> David Burley, "Ashdown, James Henry," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41922&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>27</sup> David Burley, "Ashdown, James Henry," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41922&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.



Source: *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 April 1896, 3.

Ashdown received extensive organisational support from the likes of Joseph Martin, Clifford Sifton, and Thomas Greenway, despite their differences.<sup>28</sup> Some of his most prominent advisors and campaign organizers were Hon. John Donald Cameron and Robert Watson.<sup>29</sup> John Donald Cameron was a lawyer and provincial politician, (and later judge). Born in Woodstock, Canada, Cameron was highly influential within the Liberal Party, while serving “in the Greenway administration as provincial secretary.”<sup>30</sup> Robert Watson, born in Elora, Canada West, moved to Manitoba in 1876 and became a successful businessman operating a machine shop and other milling operations in Portage and other communities in the vicinity.<sup>31</sup> Watson was elected to the Commons for Marquette as a Liberal in 1882, 1887, and 1891. Historian J.M. Bumsted notes that Watson “and was the only Liberal from the west of the Lakehead in those

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<sup>28</sup> “Meeting at Carivale,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 20 May 1896, 4; “Mr. Ashdown’s Dates,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 27 May 1896, 4; “A Martin Meeting,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 16 May 1896, 5; “Mr. Martin was there,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 May 1896, 1; An Impromptu Meeting,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 25 May 1896, 2; “Saturday’s Meetings,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 5 June 1896, 1; Another Conservative Takes the Martin Platform,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 16 June 1896, 2.

<sup>29</sup> “Meeting at Carivale,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 20 May 1896, 4; “Mr. Ashdown’s Dates,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 27 May 1896, 4.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>31</sup> J. K. Johnson, ed., “Robert Watson,” *The Canadian Directory of Parliament, 1867-1967*, (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1968), 593.

parliaments.”<sup>32</sup> Organisers and supporters such as Cameron and Watson ensured that the riding was canvassed and meetings were organized. The key organisers often spoke at rallies, introduced the candidate, and offered whatever support was necessary during the campaign period. The common thread was that these individuals were prominent local leaders, businessmen, who had little to do with the business of the C.P.R.<sup>33</sup> Ashdown relied on a Scandinavian community leader, R. Pederson, for electoral support. Pederson pledged the support of other Scandinavian voters in the riding, who, Pederson claimed in a campaign speech, heavily endorsed Ashdown. In Marquette, Scandinavians comprised of a sizable minority of the population in the riding.<sup>34</sup>

At campaign meetings on 6, 9, 16, and 31 of May 1896, as the *Manitoba Free Press* and the *Winnipeg Tribune* reported, large numbers came out to support Ashdown.<sup>35</sup> At some of the meetings, on 16 May for example, Ashdown was recorded as absent from duties with an illness.<sup>36</sup> This illness, however, did not prevent him from active campaigning later on.<sup>37</sup> On 31 May, the *Winnipeg Tribune* reported on a rally at Rapid City. Ashdown’s meeting was extremely lively, with people cheering for the candidate from both “townspeople and farmers.”<sup>38</sup> It was also reported that his speech on 9 May in Russell “won him many new friends.”<sup>39</sup> With thirty-one campaign rallies during the campaign, Ashdown understood the importance of working with local groups to organize voter support.

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<sup>32</sup> J.M. Bumsted, “Robert Watson,” *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, 261.

<sup>33</sup> “First Gun in Lisgar,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 May 1896, 1; “He Stands by the Local Government,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 3 June 1896, 1; “Rogers at Cartwright,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 12 June 1896, 3.

<sup>34</sup> “Campaign in Manitoba,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 28 May 1896, 4.

<sup>35</sup> “Ashdown at Minnedosa,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 7 May 1896, 2; “Marquette,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 11 May 1896, 4; “Mr. J. H. Ashdown,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 May 1896, 3; and “Marquette,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 1 June 1896, 1.

<sup>36</sup> “Mr. J. H. Ashdown,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 May 1896, 3

<sup>37</sup> “At Rapid City,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 1 June 1896, 1.

<sup>38</sup> “Ashdown at Minnedosa,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 7 May, 1896, 2.

<sup>39</sup> “Marquette,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 11 May 1896, 4.

Ashdown drew on a range of issues claimed *The Birtle Eye-witness*. It reported that he delivered an inspiring campaign speech to Marquette voters. He asserted that an “unsuccessful attempt has been made by the present Dominion Government to impose upon Manitoba a system of denominational separate schools, which this province is not willing to accept.”<sup>40</sup> His campaign also promised the introduction of government legislation to prevent the monopolisation of grain elevators which, he explained, increased farming costs.<sup>41</sup> In that same election address, he was quoted as saying that he wanted to work with, “legislatures to prevent monopoly in elevators.”<sup>42</sup>

Ashdown stated that strong immigration policy must attract people who are non-partisan and pragmatic individuals, thoroughly familiar with the terrain and requirements of Manitoba. These individuals, Ashdown thought, should be acquainted with the demands of the western prairie, its resources, and capabilities. Further, he pledged that a provincial Commerce Commission would conduct regular reviews to adjust freight rates, which had burdened the agrarian community. He endorsed the development of an independent merchant marine to ferry products throughout the Great Lakes and therefore to offer a secure and reasonable transporting method in addition to the railroad.<sup>43</sup> Ashdown advocated the “freedom of the Great Lakes and the building up of an independent marine so as in to give the greatest possible competition in the carrying out of our produce and the bringing in of merchandise.”<sup>44</sup> He was also committed to reducing the number of government employees, the cost of the civil service, and patronage appointments.<sup>45</sup> It was characteristic of his campaign that education was by no means the dominant issue in Ashdown’s agenda. Despite the many policies that Ashdown examined, he

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<sup>40</sup> “Ashdown’s Election Address,” *Birtle Eye-Witness*, 26 May 1896, 1.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>42</sup> “To the Electors of the Electoral Divisions of Marquette,” *Birtle Eye-Witness*, 26 May 1896, 1.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

worked with a formula to win by seeking broad support through effective campaign rallies and favouring a range of issues.<sup>46</sup>

The preservation of "National Schools" was an issue in Ashdown's portfolio, but not the most significant. He argued that Manitoba was entitled to the full use of Section 92 of the B.N.A. Act, relating to rights of the provinces. Ashdown was certain that remedial Legislation and the Conservative party's attempts to roll back the Greenway government's 1890 Schools Act were unconstitutional.<sup>47</sup>

A determined, but unsuccessful attempt has been made by the present Dominion government to impose upon Manitoba a system of denominational separate schools, which this province is not willing to accept. The government is appealing to the electors on the policy of reintroducing that coercive measure when parliament again assembles. I am unalterably opposed to Federal Remedial Legislation in any form, and pledge myself, if elected to oppose it from whatever quarter it may come.<sup>48</sup>

Ashdown meant that federal legislation that restored separate schools was not in the best interest of the province.

In Selkirk, the Liberal candidate was J. Alexander Macdonnell. He was born in Dundas, Canada West, in 1852. He attended the Hamilton Model School and the School of Technology and Practical Science, and later became a contractor and civil engineer in Western Canada.<sup>49</sup> He was also the editor of the *Manitou Mercury*. It was clear that he used a different formula to win than the rest of his Liberal colleagues. He began his campaign at the end of May planning to hold many campaign rallies and to engage in dialogue with the voters. He held a total of twelve meetings, the least of all Liberal candidates in Manitoba. Still, he engaged with the voters by campaigning in both English and French. He too advocated provincial rights. Macdonnell

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 1

<sup>47</sup> "Where they Stand," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 17 June 1896, 11.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>49</sup> J.K. Johnson, ed. "MacDonnell, John Alexander," *The Canadian Directory of Parliament, 1867-1967*, (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1968), 405

pledged that if elected, he planned to fight against any measure that introduced Remedial Legislation. He believed that such a measure infringed on the right of the province. “La plus importante question à être décidée pendant cette élection,” he told *Le Manitoba*, “est de savoir si le peuple soutiendra le gouvernement fédéral dans sa tentative de renverser l'autonomie provinciale et de forcer cette province à établir un système d'écoles séparées, lorsque, par deux fois, les électeurs opposés.”<sup>50</sup> According to *Le Manitoba*, Macdonnell suggested that the most important question before the people in Manitoba was whether the citizens supported the federal government's involvement in education.

Quels que soient les excuses ou les subterfuges qui seront employés, la question des écoles et la coercition, à l'égard du Manitoba, sont les objets réels de la campagne électorale. Je suis fermement opposé à la législation remédiatrice sous toutes ses formes, et si je suis élu, je résisterai par tous les moyens en mon pouvoir contre la coercition qu'on voudrait exercer sur cette province en matière d'éducation.<sup>51</sup>

Macdonnell clearly demonstrated that the dominant campaign issue in his mind was education, which turned out to be a most effective means to assure his victory in Selkirk.

Mainly a rural riding, Selkirk was situated north of Winnipeg constituency.<sup>52</sup>

“Economically, the constituency was largely a wheat growing area, but Selkirk was the centre of

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<sup>50</sup> “Notes Politiques,” *Le Manitoba*, 15 juin, 1896, 1. “The most important question to be decided during this election, is to know if the people will support the federal government in its attempt to reverse provincial autonomy and to force this province to establish a separate system of schools, when, since they've already opposed twice.”

<sup>51</sup> “Notes Politiques,” *Le Manitoba*, 15 juin, 1896, 1. “Whatever the excuses or the subterfuge that will be employed, the question of the schools and coercion with regards to Manitoba, are the real objects of the election campaign. I am strongly opposed to the Remedial Legislation in all forms, and if elected, I will resist with all the means in my power against the coercion which others would like to exercise on this province with regards to education.”

<sup>52</sup> In 1896, its four dominant religious groups, which were Presbyterian at 17%, Anglican at 26%, Methodist at 10%, and Roman Catholic at 19%. A majority of the constituents were British in origin at 37.6%, while others were of French at 4.9%, German at 4.4%, or Russian descent at 6.4%. Approximately 65% of the constituency could read and write, 2% could only read, 19% could not read, and 19% could not read and write. In contrast to the other constituencies, Selkirk was ranked the second lowest, between Provencher at 62% and Marquette at 67% literacy.

a fair mix of lumber and fishing trade,” wrote Ellen Cooke.<sup>53</sup> By the time of the election, Selkirk was a growing constituency, and the population had increased by 53% between 1891 and 1901. But it did not experience the influx of new people that western Manitoba did.

Macdonnell had not begun campaign preparations until the end of May, holding only a dozen campaign meetings throughout the campaign (see Appendix, Table 1). On 1 June 1896, he “resigned his position as Chief Engineer the Provincial Department Public Works.”<sup>54</sup> Macdonald by 30 May, half-way through the campaign, Macdonnell had announced and held two campaign meetings.<sup>55</sup> On 4 June 1896, he prepared for two of his largest meetings at Bird’s Hill and Dugald. The *Winnipeg Tribune* claimed that Macdonnell’s campaign rallies were well-attended. “John A. Macdonnell held a meeting at Bird’s Hill and Dugald, which was attended by a large number of the electorate, although it was raining heavily.”<sup>56</sup> Undoubtedly, evidence from the newspapers suggests that campaign rallies were integral to Macdonnell’s pre-election campaign.

In Winnipeg, the Liberal candidate, prominent lawyer and provincial politician, Joseph Martin, challenged the equally-prominent Conservative Hugh John Macdonald. Born in Ontario, Martin received his education at Belleville Secondary, the Toronto Normal School and at the University of Toronto. He practiced law in Portage La Prairie and Winnipeg after being called to the Manitoba bar in 1882.<sup>57</sup> In Winnipeg, he was partner in the law firm Martin, Mathers, and Anderson. Prior to the campaign of 1896, he had been M.L.A. for Portage between 1882 and 1892, and serving as the Attorney General for the Province between 1889 and 1891. Conservative lawyer Thomas Daly had defeated Martin in the federal election of 1891 in Selkirk.

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<sup>53</sup> E. Cooke, “The Federal Election of 1896 in Manitoba”, 98.

<sup>54</sup> “Mr. McCarthy’s Statement,” *The Globe*, 2 June 1896, 1.

<sup>55</sup> *Daily Nor’Wester, Winnipeg Tribune, and Manitoba Free Press, 23 April- 30 May 1896.*

<sup>56</sup> “Selkirk,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 4 June 1896, 2.

<sup>57</sup> J.M. Bumsted, “Joseph Martin”, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, 173.

He was acclaimed in Winnipeg in the by-election of 1893, called after Hugh John Macdonald resigned.

Martin had submitted the school legislation as Attorney General of Manitoba in 1890.<sup>58</sup> With a vested interest in leading the party at the local level, he and Greenway were well aware of that there was a “plot afoot to have [Greenway and Martin] ousted as leaders of the provincial Liberal party.”<sup>59</sup> Joseph Martin was a celebrity candidate, but he touted election issues on provincial rights, anti-protectionism, financial accountability, and a southern railway. Despite his political differences with Sifton and Greenway, he was certainly a high profile candidate who had the ability to attract attention and votes for the Liberal party.<sup>60</sup>

Martin launched his Manitoba campaign immediately after the dissolution of the House of Commons on 24 April 1896. He mounted an aggressive campaign across the province by declaring a clear cut difference between the Liberal party and all others in the election. In a bold statement in the *Winnipeg Tribune*, Martin blasted all those who supported the remedial bill, “I shall oppose the Liberal party and Liberal leaders, not a one upon the question of coercing Manitoba.”<sup>61</sup> But by June of 1896, the candidate believed that the issue to Manitobans was no longer National Schools, but provincial rights, since the Manitoba electorate re-elected the Greenway government in January of 1896.

Martin appeared at forty-five campaign rallies during the campaign. Campaign rallies were integral to the success of his campaign (see Appendix, Table 1). Transportation in this period was through horse and buggy, making travelling great distances difficult. In some instances, he travelled throughout the province to speak at various ridings in support of fellow

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

<sup>59</sup> James Mochoruk, “Thomas Greenway and the Struggle for Provincial Rights”

<sup>60</sup> Peter Brock, *Fighting Joe Martin*, 100.

<sup>61</sup> “The Difference Shown,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 29 May 1896, 2.

candidates. Prominent community leaders spoke on Martin's behalf at numerous occasions. Martin's main supporters were W.R. Mulock, Hon. John Donald Cameron, Hector Mansfield Howell, James Henry Ashdown, and Robert Watson, individuals against the C.P.R. monopoly.<sup>62</sup> Ashdown, the candidate for Macdonald riding, had major business interests in Winnipeg and the surrounding rural areas. Hector Mansfield Howell was a lawyer and judge. Although Howell had been a supporter of John A. Macdonald, he became disenchanted with the Macdonald government's neglect of the west."<sup>63</sup>



Source: *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 April 1896, 1.

For Martin, the month of May was extremely busy. He made twenty-five appearances at public meetings and demonstrations in thirty-one days, Martin campaigned in Winnipeg and around Manitoba (see Appendix, Table 1). On 11 May 1896, he held three meetings at wards four, five, and eight in Winnipeg. The *Winnipeg Tribune* claimed the meetings were well attended by campaigners filled with passion and encouragement.<sup>64</sup> At one of the largest meetings, held at the Brydon Rink, the *Winnipeg Tribune* noted that this meeting had been being called by the Conservative party. The *Tribune* claimed that 1,500 to 2,000 had gathered to

<sup>62</sup> "A Martin Meeting," *Manitoba Free Press*, 16 May 1896, 5; "Mr. Martin was there," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 May 1896, 1; "An Impromptu Meeting," *Manitoba Free Press*, 25 May 1896, 2; "Saturday's Meetings," *Manitoba Free Press*, 5 June 1896, 1; "Another Conservative Takes the Martin Platform," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 16 June 1896, 2.

<sup>63</sup> J.M. Bumsted, "Hector Mansfield Howell," *Dictionary of Manitoba*, 114.

<sup>64</sup> "Martin's Meetings," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 12 May 1896, 1.

support Martin.<sup>65</sup> The *Manitoba Free Press* also reported that the rally was a lively one full of cheers for Martin. Although women were disqualified from voting, some were said to have attended the meetings. "The centre seats were reserved for some time for ladies," wrote the *Free Press*, "a fair sprinkling of whom were in attendance."<sup>66</sup> At the close of the meeting, P.C. McIntyre, M.P.P., adjourned the proceedings after commenting on Martin's support from the workingmen in the community.<sup>67</sup> The crowd [in Winnipeg] was reported by the *Winnipeg Tribune* to be so loud that Martin "mounted the temporary platform amid deafening cheers. So enthusiastic were his supporters, including every class of citizen that several remarks of approbation were interjected amid the applause and cheering, which greeted [Martin's] appearance."<sup>68</sup>

The *Tribune* cartoonist depicted one of Martin's campaign rallies, which was said to inspire and motivate those that attended.<sup>69</sup>

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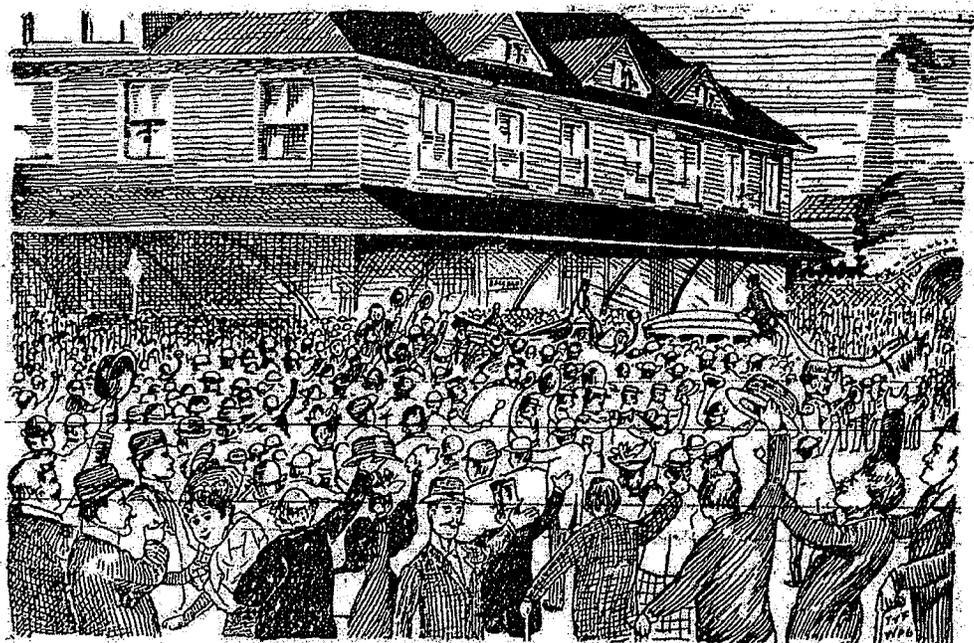
<sup>65</sup> "Mr. Martin was There," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 May 1896, 1.

<sup>66</sup> "The Mass Meeting," *Manitoba Free Press*, 25 May 1896, 1.

<sup>67</sup> "An Impromptu Meeting," *Manitoba Free Press*, 25 May, 2.

<sup>68</sup> "Charge of High Treason," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 11 May 1896, 1.

<sup>69</sup> "At the Hall," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 13 May 1896, 1.



Scene at the Depot on the arrival of Hon. Joseph Martin on Saturday Evening.

Source: *Winnipeg Tribune*, 13 May 1896, 1.

It appears that over a hundred people participated in the rally at the train depot, attesting to Martin's popularity outside Winnipeg. Women, a band, and children were portrayed in the *Tribune* image. People are seen cheering, waving hats, celebrating, and generally basking in Martin's candidature.

In June, Martin held seventeen campaign events. On 6 June 1896, "the political meeting called by the supporters of Hon. Mr. Martin at the Brydon rink on Saturday evening drew an immense attendance by citizens"<sup>70</sup> At this particular rally, the *Winnipeg Tribune* claimed that the rink was at full capacity in support of Martin.<sup>71</sup> On 16 June, he assembled two meetings before groups of German voters where two hundred were present.<sup>72</sup> Later that same day, he addressed "a meeting of Icelandic citizens."<sup>73</sup> This meeting "was held in Northwest Hall last

<sup>70</sup> "Cheered to the Echo of his School Policy," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 8 June 1896, 3.

<sup>71</sup> "Martin's Meetings," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 11 June 1896, 1.

<sup>72</sup> "Martin's Meetings," *Manitoba Free Press*, 17 June 1896, 1.

<sup>73</sup> "In Favour of Martin," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 17 June 1896, 1.

evening, which though called in the interest of Mr. H.J. Macdonald, proved to be two-thirds in favour of Hon. Jos. Martin,"<sup>74</sup> or so the *Tribune* claimed. With such dedication to campaign meetings and rallies focussed on ethnic voters, Martin clearly act upon a formula based on hard campaigning among the organized ethnic groups.

The debate over railway development emerged as an important issue for Martin, probably more important than education. While in the Manitoba government, Martin had worked to break the C.P.R. monopoly and promote the construction of branch lines into the United States. Indeed, his efforts led to the signing of contracts and charges that he had received financial benefits from certain American railway interests.<sup>75</sup> In his view, tracks heading south towards the United States guaranteed that Manitoba farmers would be free to purchase less expensive goods sold in South of border. Martin asserted that corruption in the federal government was intrinsically linked to the monopoly of utilities, such as the C.P.R.<sup>76</sup> In objecting to the federal Conservatives' approach to railway construction, he was against the use of tax dollars for the construction of the C.P.R. "This is the way in which the Canadian Pacific Railway was constructed through Manitoba," he stated, "and the Territories and the large sums of public money spent upon that railway did not benefit the people of Canada so much as American contractors and American labourers."<sup>77</sup> According to Martin, Manitoba had a strong market that could support farm production and trade goods for both a Hudson's Bay Railway and several branch lines feeding into major United States transcontinental railways.

Martin did not shy away from the schools question. A report in the *Manitoba Free Press*, which cited the *Ottawa Citizen*, stated that Martin admitted that the Act was unjust for Roman

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>75</sup> See for example James Mochoruk, "Thomas Greenway" and T.D. Regehr, *The Canadian Northern Railway: Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1976).

<sup>76</sup> "Ward Five Meeting," *Daily Nor'Wester*, 13 June 1896, 1.

<sup>77</sup> "Hon. Mr. Martin's Answer," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 June 1896, 4; and "Labour and Politics," *Manitoba Free Press*, 19 June 1896, 2.

Catholics. Martin stated, "I said then and I still think that the clause of the 1890 act, which provides for certain religious exercises is, most unjust to Roman Catholics."<sup>78</sup> This was a very odd stance to take because he was the author of the Manitoba School Act of 1890. He argued that it was clearly the provincial government's responsibility to make legislation work for the people. He further stated, "if the state is to recognise religion in its school legislation, such recognition as is acceptable to Protestants only, and in fact only to a majority of Protestants, is to my mind, rank tyranny."<sup>79</sup> The question became, why would he be the champion of Roman Catholics, if he was the one who introduced the National School Act of 1890?

Robert L. Richardson was also a prominent Winnipeg Liberal candidate, although he ran outside of the city, campaigning in Lisgar. He was a staunch supporter and extremely vocal advocate of Liberal doctrine. Born near Perth, Canada in 1860, he grew up in Lanark County to attend the Balderson Public School, before moving to Toronto where he worked for the *Globe*.<sup>80</sup> He moved to Winnipeg and became a prominent journalist and businessman as the founder and managing director of the *Winnipeg Tribune* starting in 1889. By the time of the First World War, Richardson became a Unionist M.P.

The rural riding of Lisgar ran to the south-west of Winnipeg.<sup>81</sup> "Economically," wrote Ellen Cooke, "the riding, like the rest of Manitoba, relied exclusively on wheat."<sup>82</sup> According to Cooke, there were modest sized businesses notably of flour mills, in Baldur, Gretna, Morden, and Pilot Mound, carriage makers at Manitou, Roland, and Somerset, and pump factories,

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<sup>78</sup> "The One Question," *Manitoba Free Press*, 3 June 1896, 3.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>80</sup> J.M. Bumsted, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, 208.

<sup>81</sup> In 1896, Lisgar held four dominant religious groups. These groups were Presbyterian (24%), Methodist (20%), Mennonite (24%), and Roman Catholic (9%). A majority of the constituents were of British origin (56.9%), while the remainder were of German (30.6%), French (5.8%), or Scandinavian descent (2.6%). By 1901, approximately 75% of the constituency could read and write, 1% could only read, 9% could not read, and 10% could not read and write.

<sup>82</sup> E. Cooke, "The 1896 Federal Election in Manitoba", 156.

harness makers, and creameries at other places.<sup>83</sup> Lisgar was a growing constituency in the 1890s, whose population had increased 57% between 1891 and 1901.

Richardson held only eighteen campaign meetings throughout the election campaign period (see Appendix, Table 1). During the month of May, Richardson held six rallies, which he used to convey the Liberal policies to the constituency (see Appendix, Table 1). Richardson's chief campaign organiser was R. D. Foley, the president of the Liberal association for the town of Manitou.<sup>84</sup> On 22 and 23 May 1896, the *Winnipeg Tribune* noted that Richardson's meetings "proved to be a great success, not even the bad roads and the backwardness of the season's work keeping the crowd away."<sup>85</sup>

In June, Richardson held twelve meetings (see Appendix, Table 1). On 3 June 1896, the *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that an extremely large meeting in Manitou at the Ellis House, a residential building, to be "one of the finest demonstrations ever held in town."<sup>86</sup> At this particular campaign rally, the *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that "farmers from the surrounding country, many coming from 20 and 30 miles were present and the hall was utterly unable to accommodate all. Crowds hung about the windows to catch the words of the speakers."<sup>87</sup> On 6 June, a political cartoon in the *Nor'Wester* portrayed Richardson's and Martin's reception in Morden, where they were not well received by the voters.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 155-156.

<sup>84</sup> "He Stands by the Local Government," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 3 June 1896, 1.

<sup>85</sup> "Meeting in Carmen," *Manitoba Free Press*, 25 May 1896, 1; and "First Gun in Lisgar," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 May 1896, 1.

<sup>86</sup> "He Stands by the Local Government," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 3 June 1896, 1; <http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-inventory/Boyle43-overview.pdf>, accessed 15 December 2006.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>88</sup> "Martin Pledges!," *Daily Nor'Wester*, 6 June 1896, 3.

## Messrs. Richardson and Martin Arrive at Morden.



IMPOSING PROCESSION.—A Farmer's Horse Disgusted and Drops Dead. (See Editorial)

Source: *Daily Nor'Wester*, 6 June 1896, 1.

In the cartoon, one can see that Martin (with beard) and Richardson (centre with hat and right arm raised) are preceded into Morden by a marching band. Accompanying both candidates is another farmer, who steers and directs the horses. Behind the candidates' cart is a pallbearer, who happens to be carrying tombstones. This conveys the *Nor'Wester's* view that their supporters at this time were not numerous, at least among the living, and a strong signal of electoral fraud would have been made apparent to any reader. According to the *Daily Nor'Wester*, Liberal policies decidedly turned away the residents in Lisgar at the time. However, the *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that "the political situation meeting in Mr. Richardson's interests which was held here last night was a most successful one."<sup>89</sup> The *Tribune* also noted that a heavy downpour affected the meeting, but had not discouraged the crowd which had gathered to listen to the candidates. "Had it not been for the rain storm which prevailed in the afternoon, it is doubtful if the rink which had been engaged for the occasion would have accommodated the crowd."<sup>90</sup> With the infrequency of meetings that Richardson held in Lisgar, it seems that campaign organization was not very effective. The main local issue was over the practicality and feasibility of a railway line heading south towards the American border.<sup>91</sup> The *Winnipeg*

<sup>89</sup> "Lisgar: Meeting at Rathwell in the Interests of Richardson's Candidature," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 8 June 1896, 1.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

*Tribune* reported that Liberal Premier Thomas Greenway gave a speech supporting Richardson addressed, "the tariff and showed how the people are robbed by it. Whatever people might do in other parts of Canada, he had yet to find one man who could stand up and offer any good argument in favour of continuing the tariff, which charged an enormous tax upon the implements and commodities of the farmers."<sup>92</sup>

It appears, however, on first glance that Richardson believed that policy was crucial to win Lisgar.<sup>93</sup> In the following campaign speech reported in the *Winnipeg Tribune*, Richardson suggested that the Conservative party had overstepped its jurisdictional boundaries by attempting to push forward with Remedial Legislation.

With regard to the school question, which by reason of the dictatorial position of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and unprincipled policy of the Dominion government has unfortunately been made the paramount issue of the campaign, it will appear too many superfluous, for me to state my views so well are they known.<sup>94</sup>

Clearly, Richardson felt that the Manitoba school question had been far from resolved in the provincial election of 1895/96 in Manitoba. By the same token, federal override of provincial legislation, though sanctioned by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, Richardson would fight against any Conservative measure to overturn National Schools.

As an advocate of provincial rights, Richardson was clear that good and solid education was not a matter for religious groups, but a matter that fell under the purview and direction of the provincial educational system, which was entrenched provincially in Canada's political system.<sup>95</sup> Even if the defense of the Catholic Franco-Manitobans required constitutional redress, Richardson felt that the authority was vested in the governing authority of the provincial

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<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>93</sup> *Winnipeg Tribune, Manitoba Free Press, Birtle Eye-Witness, Daily Nor'Wester, and Brandon Weekly Sun.*

<sup>94</sup> "Where they Stand," *Winnipeg Daily Tribune*, 17 June 1896, 11.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

legislature and the provisions enumerated in the Manitoba Act of 1870. Of all the Liberal candidates examined in this chapter, Richardson was the only one who spoke extensively to election issues during the sixty-day campaign.

### **Conclusion**

The Liberal party in Manitoba were disorganised, although some candidates orchestrated strong and effective issue-based campaigns. Various newspapers reported that Liberals met with voters to pitch a platform that encapsulated provincial rights, anti-protectionism, financial accountability, and a strategic plan to develop a railway track heading south towards the American border. Education, it is clear, was only one of the issues in the Liberal party platform. Second, candidates worked an effective campaign by holding numerous campaign meetings. With this method, the Liberals cultivated voters throughout the election period.

The Liberal party used issues to appeal to voters because they had to convince the electorate that they offered different approaches to Canada's future than the Conservative and third parties. All seven Liberal candidates campaigning in Manitoba argued that education was "the paramount issue in the campaign."<sup>96</sup> However, there were other important issues, including trade, government spending, and railways, and each required the attention of voters. Despite political and personal differences over on education, it was not the only issue that received attention.

Throughout the campaign, Martin muddied the waters by his odd stance on education. Although the original author of the Manitoba School Act in 1890, he realigned himself as a defender of Roman Catholic rights in 1896. Sifton also muddied the Liberal waters. He diminished Liberal seats in the province by supporting McCarthy in Brandon, sacrificing party policy for his own policy preferences.

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<sup>96</sup> "First Gun in Lisgar," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 May 1896, 1.

## CHAPTER IV: The Patrons of Industry and D'Alton McCarthy

By the mid-nineties, the party system in Manitoba showed signs of instability. The still-new party system at the provincial level had fractured to some extent. In the voting held in January 1896, the electorate embraced choice. Just over 49% voted Liberal, 37.5% voted Conservative, and 10% voted for the Patrons while 2% chose independent candidates. This resulted in a strong Liberal majority of 29 M.L.A.s, while 5 were Conservatives and 5 were either Patrons or independents. These results were a clear sign that alternatives to the so-called traditional parties were seriously entertained by Manitoba voters. In federal politics, alternative political groups and politicians quarrelling with the established parties had serious opportunities. The Patrons of Industry, who had already organized at the provincial level, and a loose group dubbed the McCarthyite League after disgruntled Conservative D'Alton McCarthy, emerged as surprisingly viable alternatives in certain parts of Manitoba. This chapter assesses the strategies and campaigns of the alternative parties. It will offer a brief description of the history of third parties in Canada by examining the Patrons of Industry and D'Alton McCarthy and the McCarthyite League in the federal election of 1896 in Manitoba. The chapter has three distinct goals. First, it will describe the political issues that distinguished the Patrons of Industry and D'Alton McCarthy and his group of supporters from the Liberal and Conservative parties during the contest. Second, it will assess whether education or other issues were more important to these candidates. Third, it will examine how campaign management affected the election outcome.

## The Patrons of Industry and Manitoba Patrons of Industry Candidates

The Patrons of Industry were new to the political process at the federal level. This inexperience however, was not the case at the local level. In "1896 and All That," Donald Blake observed that the Patrons of Industry were an effective local agrarian protest group and not just in Manitoba.<sup>1</sup> Blake showed that in Ontario during the provincial election of 1892, the Patrons "capitalised on a strong showing of (14 of 92 seats) in the previous election to garner nearly 8 percent of the vote and two seats."<sup>2</sup> In "The Patrons of Industry of Manitoba," Brian McCutcheon argued that "it was the [1890s] Depression that was the actual motivating factor in the Patrons' decision to enter the political arena."<sup>3</sup> The Patrons of Industry felt that, as a new political entity and voice for farmers, they could challenge effectively the federal Tories and Grits.

The Patrons approached the federal election with two goals. First, they relied on their organisers and high profile candidates to appeal to farm interests. Second, they worked to convince voters of the need for systematic reform to the two-party system in Canada. Like the Liberal party, which had held a national policy convention in June 1893, the Patrons of Industry also relied upon a policy convention. Ontario reformers met on 22 September 1891 for the Patron Grand Association for Ontario, and drew up their positions on key initiatives on paper.<sup>4</sup> Soon after, the Grand Association for Québec and Manitoba adopted these policy initiatives as their own. According to Ramsay Cook, the Patrons "adopted political goals from the outset but, somewhat paradoxically, refused to become a political party. At first they expected to convert

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Blake, "1896 and All That," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 12: 2 (1979), 266.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 266.

<sup>3</sup> Brian McCutcheon, "The Patrons of Industry in Manitoba, 1890-1898." *Manitoba Historical Society Transactions*, (No. 22, 1965-66 season), 16.

<sup>4</sup> *Patron Platform*, 22 September 1891.

one or both of the existing parties to their beliefs.”<sup>5</sup> Cook adds that the Patron leaders “believed that the grip of the “interests” on government could be broken only by a political coalition of organised farmers and organised labour.”<sup>6</sup> Patron candidates and strategists organised their campaign around several key issues, which centred on opposition to the protective tariff, railway monopoly, and the political “purity” issues and of independence of parliament, senate reform, and greater accountability in office.<sup>7</sup>

The Patrons had candidates in thirty-one ridings in Canada’s eighth general election. The party’s strongholds were in Southern Ontario and Manitoba. In the newspapers, the Patrons were identified as an organised farm and regional political movement, which appeared to have adopted election issues from both Liberal and Conservative parties. By June 1896, the party was struggling with a weakened leadership that had affected the organisational and internal management of the party.<sup>8</sup> Eayrs cites letters indicating that the rank and file of the Patron order “were [extremely] concerned with various suggestions of political “co-operation” between Patrons and Liberals, Patrons and McCarthyies, or all of the three.”<sup>9</sup> Eayrs concluded that relations between high profile Patron candidates revealed the considerable disharmony within a third party “trying to establish itself in a two-party nation.”<sup>10</sup>

It was in these circumstances that the Patrons of Industry promised to bring political, economic, and social change to the way in which Canada was governed. The Patrons at times considered D’Alton McCarthy as their closest ally. McCarthy had validated the farmers’

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<sup>5</sup> Ramsay Cook, “George W. Wrigley,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41275&query=>, accessed: 22 December 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Ramsay Cook, “George W. Wrigley,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41275&query=>, accessed: 22 December 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Eayrs, “The Election of 1896 in Western Ontario,” M.A. Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1951, 1-14.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

movement in 1893 when he spoke in the House of Commons on tariff reform and agrarian discontent over the National Policy.<sup>11</sup> “McCarthy was popular with their [Patrons of Industry] rank and file but he found grand President Caleb Alvord Mallory and his board difficult” writes McCarthy’s biographer.<sup>12</sup> This distrust in the Tories and Grits, he continues, was due to the farmers’ skepticism about “professional men such as lawyers, whom they considered exploiters of society.”<sup>13</sup>

The Patrons of Industry had registered three candidates in the Manitoba contest, G. A. J. A. Marshall, W. Postlethwaite, and Charles Braithwaite. The campaign and election strategies for the Patrons of Industry revolved around the national Patron platform. The Patrons’ main objective in the federal contest was to show that they were a viable and sustainable political alternative to the traditional two-party system in the country.<sup>14</sup>

Patron candidates relied heavily on their strategists and their organisers for support. Campaign organisers were mainly Patron affiliated members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly or defeated candidates from the provincial election of 1895/96 in Manitoba.<sup>15</sup> They were Dr. Hughes of Avondale, W. Sirrett of Beautiful Plains, Jas. Davidson of Cypress county, W. Crosby of Dennis County, and G. Ross of Emerson County. Other avid supporters who spoke on behalf of the Patrons in Manitoba included Clarke Wallace, D. McAinsh, William Long, James Knight, H. C. Merell, and Thomas Dunbar.<sup>16</sup> James Knight was a teacher in McGregor. William Long was a painter in Brandon. Thomas Dunbar lived in Minnedosa. It

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<sup>11</sup> Larry Kulisek, “McCarthy, D’Alton,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40390&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>12</sup> Larry Kulisek, “McCarthy, D’Alton,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40390&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Larry Kulisek, “McCarthy, D’Alton,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40390&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>14</sup> *Winnipeg Tribune, Manitoba Free Press, The Birtle-Eye Witness, Daily Nor’Wester, and Brandon Weekly Sun*.

<sup>15</sup> “Rutherford at Neepawa,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 10 June 1896, 1.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

was clear that these individuals formed a network of associates and colleagues who the Patrons of Industry relied on to break the reign of the two-party system in the Dominion. The common link between these supporters was that a majority had lived in rural constituencies outside of Winnipeg.

G. A. J. A. Marshall was the vice-president of the Grand Board of the Manitoba and North West Territories of the Patrons of Industry, and candidate for Marquette. As the Grand-Master of the Orange Lodge, Marshall held strong anti-Catholic views. He had emigrated from England in the late 1880s. *The Russell Chronicle and Free Trade Advocate* claimed that Marshall came to Manitoba for the sake of his family and particularly in order that his “sons might learn the practical work of farming here and grow up with the country.”<sup>17</sup> Marshall’s Orange Lodge connections suggest strong social opinions. Historian Hereward Senior explains that “Irish Orange lodges acquired the character of a fraternal society and political group, gaining the patronage of influential sections of the upper and middle classes.”<sup>18</sup> Orange lodge membership was from all socio-economic classes. “Men from a wide variety of backgrounds and ethnic groups belonged to the order,” explain historical geographers Cecil Houston and William Smyth.<sup>19</sup> They found that “Canada’s Orange lodges were not restricted in class and creed, and by geography, their numerical strength, and social composition.”<sup>20</sup> Indeed, membership included all walks of life, including professionals, merchants, tradesmen, clerks, and labourers.<sup>21</sup> In one of his many articles on Orangeism in Ontario Politics, Senior explains that by 1872, “although the Lodge continued to serve first-generation Irish Protestants [it] had acquired a large following among native Canadians and Protestant Canadians and Protestant immigrants

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<sup>17</sup> “The Political Situation,” *The Russell Chronicle and Free Trade Advocate*, 6 June 1896, 1.

<sup>18</sup> Hereward Senior, “The Genesis of Canadian Orangeism,” *Ontario History* 60: 2 (1968), 13.

<sup>19</sup> Cecil Houston and William Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore: A Historical Geography of the Orange Order in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 85.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

who did not have Irish backgrounds.”<sup>22</sup> He further describes the role of the Orange Order in Canadian politics. This base of Orange Lodge support was similar to the outlook that the Patrons appealed to in order to win votes.

The part which Orangemen played in party politics was, in theory at least, the means of maintaining their long-term objectives of defending Protestantism against the permanent threat posed by the existence of the Roman Catholic Church and upholding the crown and British connection in North America.<sup>23</sup>

For the federal election of 1896, Marshall held eleven meetings during the campaign period, more than any of his Patron colleagues in Manitoba (see Appendix, Table 1). On 27 May, Marshall assembled a meeting at Shoal Lake and then organized a convention of the Patrons in Marquette at Thompson hall. Approximately forty people attended the meeting. Marshall’s chief campaign organiser and strategist was E. Soldan

It was not until June that Marshall’s campaign picked up momentum. On 6 June 1896, he held a meeting in the Agricultural Hall in Birtle. It was noted in the *Birtle Eye-Witness* that, “Owing to lack of notice, there was not a large attendance.”<sup>24</sup> On 12 June a rally was held in Hamiota, when the *Winnipeg Tribune* noted that “Mr. Marshall the Patron candidate, with Major Boulton and Mr. Doyle, had a most successful meeting here last night.”<sup>25</sup> At this meeting, Boulton discussed at great length the advantages of sustaining the trade relationship with Great Britain.

Marshall certainly relied on policy issues to increase voter awareness in his riding. In his campaign speeches, education was only one of a myriad of issues he addressed. He touched on Canada’s trade policy, which Marshall believed that, “one of the greatest difficulties the country

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<sup>22</sup> Hereward Senior, “Orangeism in Ontario Politics, 1872-1896,” in *Oliver Mowat’s Ontario: Papers presented to the Oliver Mowat Colloquium Queen’s University, November 25-26, 1970*, ed. Donald Swainson, (Toronto: Macmillian of Canada, 1972).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>24</sup> “Marshall’s Meeting,” *Birtle Eyewitness*, 9 June 1896, 1.

<sup>25</sup> “The Patron in Marquette,” *The Manitoba Free Press*, 13 June 1896, 5.

suffered from was dearness generated by [tariff] protection.”<sup>26</sup> At the same time, Marshall also espoused a closer economic relationship with the United States, which he felt would make Manitoba a stronger economic contributor to Canada. At Marshall’s campaign meetings, his greatest concern was sustaining what he described as a balanced approach to economic growth in Canada. This approach supported his criticisms of the protective tariff and broad rejection of the National Policy.

In a subsequent campaign speech, Marshall campaigned on a range of issues. The *Witness* reported that he “made comparisons with those in the parties and showed up the High Commissioner, superannuation, the voters’ list, and franchise act, waste of public money, and claimed that we could not expect a change for the better from men who had become millionaires at the public expense or by favour of legislation.”<sup>27</sup> The *Witness* explained that he “advocated the simplification of the laws and humorously referred to court decisions reverses, favoured a revenue tariff, manhood suffrage, woman suffrage, and abolition of the senate.”<sup>28</sup> On the issue of education, *The Witness* reported that he was “strongly opposed to federal coercion.”<sup>29</sup> This reference to the school question was his only reference to it, although it shows his commitment for Manitoba policy. With these election issues, it was undeniably clear that education was only one of the many issues in his campaign.

W. Postlethwaite, the Patron candidate for the Brandon riding, appeared at nine rallies (see Appendix, Table 1). However, Postlethwaite declared his candidacy rather late in the game. *The Winnipeg Tribune* reported that “unless Mr. Postlethwaite, the Patron candidate in Brandon, gives a more explicit pledge than that contained in this election address, published in the Patron

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

organ, he can scarcely hope to secure the support of the anti-coercionists who are so numerous in his constituency.”<sup>30</sup> Four days later, the *Manitoba Free Press* stated that Postlethwaite’s chance of victory was “questionable.”<sup>31</sup>

By the end of May, Postlethwaite pushed his campaign into a higher gear. At his first planned campaign meeting on 27 May, Postlethwaite challenged W.A. Macdonald to a debate in Douglas.<sup>32</sup> At this meeting, the *Manitoba Free Press* reported that the crowd was not in favour of the Patron candidate, and in fact made it seem that he was never going to win over the support of the audience.<sup>33</sup> At this meeting, however, the *Manitoba Free Press* reported that Postlethwaite spoke to “free trade, the school question, and the National Policy.”<sup>34</sup> Not all of his rallies were failures. On 2 June 1896 in Boissevain, *The Manitoba Free Press* noted that a large gathering came out to support Postlethwaite.<sup>35</sup> At the meeting, Mr. W. Long spoke on behalf of Postlethwaite stating that “the Patrons had already a claim on the support of the farmers for past services, that the farmers hitherto been divided and their wants not considered, and that they should act together and independently of both parties [Liberal and Conservative.]”<sup>36</sup> The newspaper stated that “although seeding had not yet been finished in the district,” it had not prevented people from attending the campaign rally.<sup>37</sup> Another campaign supporter, B. Fisher, a resident of Springfield also spoke, saying even though the federal government pushed for greater immigration to the West, he felt that “the greatest need was to remove the heavy burdens of

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<sup>30</sup> “Notes,” *Winnipeg Daily Tribune*, 2 May 1896, 2.

<sup>31</sup> “The Brandon Situation,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 6 May 1896, 2.

<sup>32</sup> “Meeting in Douglas,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 29 May 1896, 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>35</sup> “Patrons of Brandon,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 6 June 1896, 2.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

indirect taxation from the farmers so as to give them a chance to compete with the world.”<sup>38</sup>

Campaign supporters, without question, were a critical component to Postlethwaite’s campaign.

At this campaign rally, Postlethwaite made clear of his position on the key campaign issues. He stated that “there were other questions of importance [than education] for present consideration.”<sup>39</sup> Specifically, he referred to “prohibition, rigid economy in every department, the Hudson Bay railway, and trade.”<sup>40</sup> He was against the construction of the Hudson Bay Line, and advised his supporters to think of the party, not the individual. He also declared that, “preferential trade was desirable, but unlikely, and advocated close trade relations with Great Britain.”<sup>41</sup> Clearly, one can see that Postlethwaite had more issues in mind than education and National Schools.

His campaign also scheduled a meeting in Hartney on 5 June 1896. The *Manitoba Free Press* reported that owed “to the unpopularity of his platform in this district, there was no meeting.”<sup>42</sup> “In another meeting on 17 June, Postlethwaite held a meeting in Brandon. At this meeting, James Elder of Virden, although not a Patron, spoke on behalf of the Patron candidate. Elder, who spoke in favour of farmer interest, argued that no other party understood the complexities of farming like the Patrons of Industry did.”<sup>43</sup> The *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that “he accused the Liberals for not having a fixed policy, and said he, the Patrons, had always had something tangible.”<sup>44</sup>

For the Patrons, campaign management was of great significance for a successful campaign, and they did emerge as a credible and effective alternative choice to the traditional

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>42</sup> “Not A Patron District,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 6 June 1896, 1.

<sup>43</sup> “McCarthy is Still Gaining,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 17 June 1896, 1.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 1

major parties. Patron candidates worked a formula to win votes, which was to inform voters of their positions on policy issues and to participate in as many meetings as possible. Contact with high profile supporters and local Patron leaders were also critical factors to the election outcome. The frequency of campaign meetings that Patron candidates held during the campaign period shows that organisers and strategists worked hard to engage with the voters to offer reasonable political alternatives to voters. Despite not having as many meetings as the Tories or the Grits, it must be made clear that the geographical areas Patron candidates campaigned across were large and their influence not insignificant. Indeed, as election results show (see Table 6), the Patrons did have an effect on the electoral outcomes in the three ridings they ran candidates in. As this section on the Patrons of Industry has also shown, the issue of education was only one of the issues in the 1896 campaign. Of greater political currency was the improvement of trade with the United States, the prohibition of alcohol sales, and railway construction to break the C.P.R. monopoly. The challenges to this third party in the campaign were numerous, but it was their belief in the farmer's demands for structural reform to Dominion politics that made them a strong agrarian voice and in a way the regional political protest group.

### **D'Alton McCarthy in Manitoba**

D'Alton McCarthy, running as an independent candidate in 1896, was a very prominent dissident Conservative by the 1890s. McCarthy had immigrated as a youth from Ireland to Upper Canada in 1847, and his family settled near Barrie, Ontario.<sup>45</sup> "D'Alton McCarthy received his early education at schools directed by clergymen in Blackrock and near Dublin."<sup>46</sup> Trained as a lawyer, McCarthy was an active Orangeman and a grand master in the order, who

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<sup>45</sup> Larry Kulisek, "McCarthy, D'Alton," Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40390&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>46</sup> Larry Kulisek, "McCarthy, D'Alton," Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40390&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

was known to express his strong political views, “but in 1870 he would deplore attempts to rouse Orange passions following the death of Thomas Scott during the Red River uprising, and he pleaded with his fellow Orangemen to remain united behind the Conservative party.”<sup>47</sup> Hereward Senior states that even though McCarthy left the Conservative party in 1870, he would “draw most of his popular [political] support from the Orange Order” in his later career in politics.<sup>48</sup> McCarthy had become a staunch critic of the National Policy and supporter of provincial rights when he left the Conservative party.

In 1884, he helped established the Liberal-Conservative Union of Ontario, which he served as President. McCarthy “took an outspoken stand on the Riel issue in election campaigns in 1886 and 1887.”<sup>49</sup> In seeking office and political clout, Larry Kulisek argues that by 1894 that “there were signs that McCarthy was making significant progress towards achieving the balance of power he sought” in federal politics.<sup>50</sup> With political experience dating back to when he was president of the Conservative riding of Simcoe in 1873, McCarthy has always championed provincial rights. By 1890, McCarthy was also the lawyer for the Province of Manitoba in the crucial Brophy case involving the Manitoba School Act.

McCarthy is a sterling example of the master campaigner who relied on election strategists and supporters. Having political and personal ties to individuals of all political stripes, McCarthy was a master on the campaign trail.<sup>51</sup> In 1896, he ran in two ridings, one in Brandon, Manitoba and the other in Simcoe, Ontario.<sup>52</sup> David Hall noted that Clifford Sifton had a vested

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<sup>47</sup> Larry Kulisek, “McCarthy, D’Alton,” Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40390&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>48</sup> Senior, “Orangeism in Ontario Politics,” 146.

<sup>49</sup> Larry Kulisek, “McCarthy, D’Alton,” Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40390&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>50</sup> Larry Kulisek, “McCarthy, D’Alton,” Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40390&query=>, accessed: 4 January 2006.

<sup>51</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Sifton Papers*, McCarthy to Sifton, 4 April 1896.

<sup>52</sup> D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900, Vol. 1*, 110.

interest in the federal campaign, since “if McCarthy had been elected for two constituencies, McCarthy would choose to represent his Ontario riding, thus reopening Brandon.”<sup>53</sup>

McCarthy held nineteen meetings during the sixty-day campaign period in Manitoba (see Appendix, Table 1). McCarthy began his campaign in Ontario for his riding of North Simcoe and travelled to Manitoba on 25 May 1896, two days later than he had originally planned. McCarthy’s campaign in Manitoba began the minute he stepped off the train. He spent a total of twelve days in Manitoba, holding eleven meetings in May and eight in June (see Appendix, Table 1). Each of the meetings was not only well-received, but large in attendance.

Like most candidates in the election but far more so since he was not even a resident of the province, McCarthy depended on local election supporters. McCarthy’s chief organiser in Manitoba was Clifford Sifton. Sifton was a newspaper publisher, lawyer, and politician. Born in London, “he practiced law in Brandon and was M.L.A. for North Brandon between 1888 and 1896.”<sup>54</sup> Other high profile McCarthy supporters included personalities like Winnipeg-based Thomas Arther Burrows, who was the proprietor for Lumber, Lath, and Shingles at 87 Maple Street, and eventually a very wealthy businessman. Supporters also included Elias George Conklin, a Winnipeg real estate broker and manager of Western Loan and Trust. Other notables included W. Grundy, proprietor of Pianos, Organs, and Sewing Machines on Main Street. Chas. Adams was a merchant in Brandon. Jas. Harvey lived in Deloraine. Robert J. Whitla was proprietor of Whitla and Company, wholesaler of dry goods, John Dick was part of Banning and Company, at 430 Edmonton. This array of prominent individuals including businessmen, journalists, farmers, doctors, lawyers, military officials, judges, and civil servants supported

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>54</sup> J.M. Bumsted, “Sir Clifford Sifton,” in *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, 227.

McCarthy. The ability of McCarthy to cooperate with a variety of people, above all those in the Liberal party, was the great asset to his campaign.

In Manitoba, McCarthy's reception and campaign rallies were electric. For example, at one of McCarthy's meetings on 26 May "when it was first announced in the *Sun* that D'Alton McCarthy would address the electors of Brandon at an early date, the news spread far and near and when it was definitely announced that the champion of national schools and provincial rights would arrive here on Tuesday evening, the 26th, great preparations were made for his reception."<sup>55</sup> This Brandon meeting was so rowdy, that "by the time of the arrival of the train, the platform and surrounding crowded with people early waiting, and when the last cry of "here she comes" was heard, it was echoed in all parts."<sup>56</sup> As for the crowd itself, it cheered so loudly for McCarthy that he was reported to be flabbergasted.

There was the signal for an outburst of applause, like which was never heard before in this city. Cheer rose upon cheer, and as with bared head, Mr. McCarthy looked up and down the depot platform and gazed upon the sea of upturned faces and cheers were renewed, and when at last he stepped down upon the depot platform, the surging crowd closed in so upon him that it was the greatest difficulty the body guard formed by the reception committee where enabled to get him safely to the carriage which was waiting at the entrance.<sup>57</sup>

It was at this meeting that he openly declared "I belong to no party."<sup>58</sup>

For his first Manitoba campaign meeting on 25 May held at the Brydon Rink in Winnipeg, the *Manitoba Free Press* noted that "three coaches filled to overflowing with friends of Mr. D'Alton McCarthy left the C.P.R. Depot" for "West Selkirk to welcome Mr. McCarthy to Manitoba."<sup>59</sup> According to the newspaper, the delegation comprised nearly 150 members.<sup>60</sup> At the rally, McCarthy stated that the National Policy had failed Manitoba. McCarthy claimed that

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<sup>55</sup> "A Wonderful Reception," *Brandon Weekly Sun*, 28 May 1896, 1.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>59</sup> "McCarthy and Martin," *Manitoba Free Press*, 26 May 1896, 1.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

the National Policy benefited no one in the West. "I did not think that any man could assert that the National Policy protected the agriculturalists, but [Conservative candidate W.A.] Macdonald has said that this country requires protection from Minnesota and Dakota and Chicago butchers. I did not expect you to go out of Manitoba to buy wheat."<sup>61</sup> Speaking strongly in favour of building the Hudson's Bay Railroad, McCarthy showed that how much more there was to his campaign than just education. In another meeting on 30 May in Boissevain, the *Tribune* reported that "the streets of Boissevain were thronged with people all Thursday afternoon to hear the great McCarthy. He did not arrive on time. In the meantime, the hall was cleared, as that building would not hold the [gathering] crowd."<sup>62</sup> *The Tribune* reported at this meeting that Sifton was one of the first to address the crowds, stating that "Mr. Macdonald [the Conservative candidate for Winnipeg] was a little off the policy of the government he was supporting when he advocated national schools."<sup>63</sup> At this meeting, McCarthy was received with tremendous cheer. During his address, he stated that, "every vote cast for the Tupper government in this election meant a vote for separate schools."<sup>64</sup> On other election issues, McCarthy stated, "he was in favour of reciprocity with the United States, while he scored the government for talking preferential trade, while everything they bought from England was taxed much higher than if the same came from the United States."<sup>65</sup>

After McCarthy's departure on 5 June, he handed the rest of his Brandon campaign to his organisers. As an example of his political craft, McCarthy and his colleagues convinced political opponent, Charles Wesley Speers, candidate for the Liberal Party, to withdraw his candidacy in Brandon since they had overlapping political views. In a public speech, Speers stated that his

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>62</sup> "McCarthy their man," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 4 June 1896, 1.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 1

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 1

withdrawal meant that rural farmers could vote for McCarthy, who could best serve their political and economic interests. On 12 June 1896, Clifford Sifton, M.L.A. for Brandon, spoke in McCarthy's name in Hartney "where approximately 400 persons attended."<sup>66</sup> The *Manitoba Free Press* reported that Speers spoke for an hour, while Sifton spoke two hours, both on behalf of McCarthy.<sup>67</sup> The *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that the tariff "bore heavily on the farmer."<sup>68</sup> With the frequency of McCarthy's meetings throughout the campaign and the number of meetings held on his behalf, the rallies were crucial to win over support on voting day. McCarthy spent most of his time campaigning in Ontario. However, this factor had not worked against him or prevented him from winning votes. It became clear that the political partnership formed with Speers and Sifton created a network of organisers which assured McCarthy of a strong majority.

McCarthy formed working relationships with members of other parties. Kenneth McLaughlin explains that, with these alliances, McCarthy brokered a relationship rooted on the "Liberal party's old antagonism towards separate schools and the inevitable tendency of most Liberals to share the views of D'Alton McCarthy on the school question and to support Greenway and Martin in Manitoba."<sup>69</sup> In one political cartoon, the *Nor'Wester* suggest that McCarthy and Manitoba Liberals fed the Manitoba electorate with issues in the way that farmers tended to their livestock.

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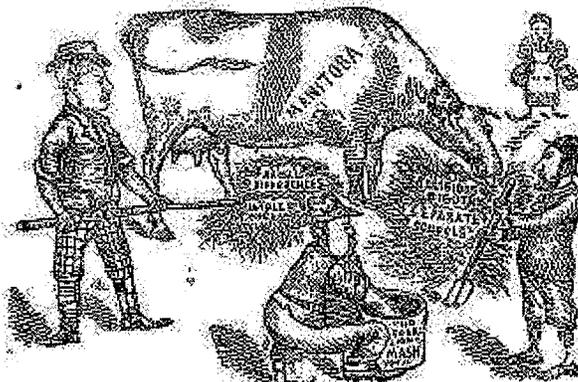
<sup>66</sup> "Meeting at Hartney," *Manitoba Free Press*, 13 June 1896, 5.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

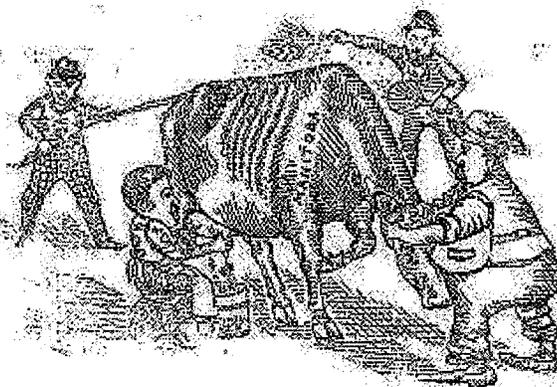
<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>69</sup> Kenneth McLaughlin, "'Riding The Protestant Horse': The Manitoba Schools Question and Canadian Politics, 1890-1896," *Historical Studies* 53 (1986), 39.

AN AGRICULTURAL SCENE :--How the Manitoba Cow Is Fed and Milked



Feeding Her With the School Question



HOW SHE IS MILKED :--McCarthy's Fees as Counsel for Manitoba in the School Case Will Probably Amount to \$25,000. Gwynne, Martin and the Tribune Are Assisting to Turn This into the Ground to Make a Political Issue.

Source: *The Daily Nor'Wester*, 10 June 1896, 1.

The cartoon portrays McCarthy and the Liberal party feeding religious bigotry, racial difference, and separate schools as election issues to win voter support. McCarthy and the Liberal party appeared to the working man, dressed in farmer overalls, who typified the political attitude of the electorate.

Despite his reputation for being an avid spokesperson for National Schools, McCarthy was not a one-issue candidate. Prior to campaigning in Manitoba, McCarthy wrote a series of confidential letters to Clifford Sifton regarding campaign politics and issues. In one letter, McCarthy explained his thoughts about the political affairs of the province. In his opinion, McCarthy felt that Tupper had failed as government leader. He also stated that Charles Tupper

and the Tories party grossly underestimated the number of English voters in Western Canada who are against the C.P.R. and Remedial Legislation.<sup>70</sup>

For a campaign rally in Boissevain on 30 May, the *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that “on the trade question, he [McCarthy] was in favour of reciprocity with the United States.”<sup>71</sup> The *Tribune* also noted that “everything they [Canadians] bought from England was taxed so much higher than if the same came from the United States.”<sup>72</sup> In this same speech, McCarthy stated that he was in “favour of lowering the duty on English goods.”<sup>73</sup> He also stated that Hudson’s Bay railway, “had it been simply brought up as an election dodge, as an order-in-council had been passed granting \$2,500,000 (which was not binding by law) to build the road, and then there was considerable money spent by contractors on the road when it fell through.”<sup>74</sup> It becomes clear that other issues other than education were important to McCarthy, as it was one of the issues he used to differentiate himself from other candidates in the Brandon riding.

One of McCarthy’s most-discussed election issues was indeed education. In a letter to Sifton, he argued that education had split the English vote. In the letter, he also discussed the shortcomings of party management of the Conservative party, specifically their organisers’ lack of support amongst English-speaking voters.

Sir Charles [Tupper] forgets apparently that there is an enormous English vote which is just as much pleased with the failure of the Government to pass the Bill and public opinion is backing up the Opposition that is being made to it as the French Province would be to see it a law, and that the weapon he is using is a two-edge sword, the sharpest edge of which will be used to the destruction of his own followers.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 April 1896.

<sup>71</sup> “McCarthy their Man,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 4 June 1896, 1.

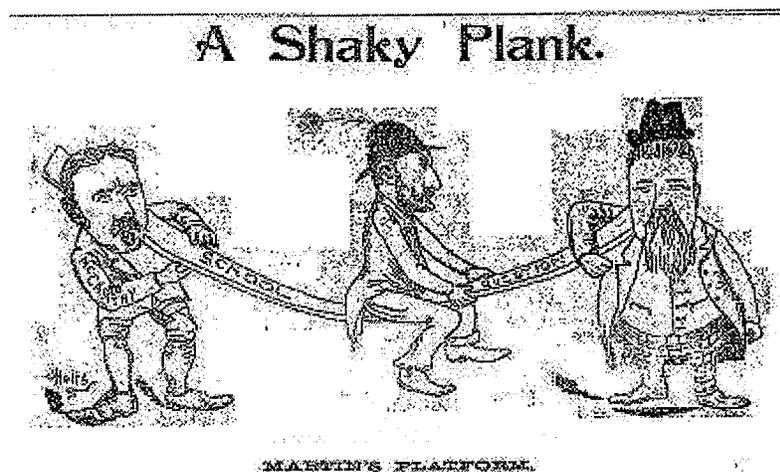
<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>75</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Sifton Papers*, McCarthy to Sifton, 4 April 1896.

He meant that a significant proportion of English voters were prepared to vote against the Conservative party. McCarthy merely confirmed that the English-Protestant vote in the both Ontario and Manitoba was important to secure the defeat of the government in the 1896 federal election.



Source: *Nor'Wester*, 8 June 1896, 1.

The political cartoon suggests that McCarthy (left) and Thomas Greenway (right) propped up Joseph Martin's position on National Schools. Both Greenway and McCarthy were important figures who pushed forward the National Schools program. The cartoon shows that McCarthy and Greenway were willing to support Martin and the federal Liberal party. Since the political interests of Manitoba Liberals were similar to that of his supporters, especially in the area of provincial rights, it made perfect sense to strike a political deal with those who had related political goals.

McCarthy believed that the Conservative government had no true position on all issues, but instead schemed to combine and adopt policies advanced by the Liberal Party and the Patrons of Industry. With the schools question, McCarthy felt that the Conservatives exacerbated the issue. He stated that, "make it perfectly clear to the people of Canada who may

have had doubts on the subject that it is not simply for the purpose of religious teachings.”<sup>76</sup> He believed that the Roman Catholic Church leaders and not laymen were responsible for the drama that had unfolded since the passage of the schools act in 1890.<sup>77</sup>

McCarthy claimed that Hugh John Macdonald, Conservative candidate for Winnipeg, misunderstood or misrepresented the entire issue of National Schools. According to McCarthy, the Conservatives in Manitoba could not toe the party line on the issue of education. “There will not be more than one member in favour of Remedial Legislation,” he had written Sifton.<sup>78</sup> Macdonald had been guided if not persuaded by French-speaking officials, thus he could not prevent the passage of Remedial Legislation. Hugh John Macdonald was unfit to manage the political and economic interest of the province. In a public message in *The Manitoba Free Press*, McCarthy said,

I think Mr. Macdonald is a gentlemanly fellow, a hard fighter, but the position on the school question is a most illogical one. He is in favour of the present school system, but cannot find terms praiseworthy enough to apply to the Tupper administration. To my mind, it is either for the school system of Manitoba and against the government, or for separate schools and with Tupper’s party. There is no deflection, and so the majority of the people wherever I go view it. The most extraordinary event in politics that has happened since I left the East, is the pledge which the clergy of Québec have asked Hon. Mr. Laurier and his lieutenants in question to sign.<sup>79</sup>

McCarthy pledged to safeguard the existing educational system in the province. By forming partnerships with Sifton and Greenway, amongst others, McCarthy created and established a network of supporters who offered their support to help him win votes.

As the evidence has shown, campaign management was as important as election issues because McCarthy counted on close personal, professional, and political relationships with many

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 April 1896.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 April 1896.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 April 1896.

<sup>79</sup> “Mr. McCarthy Returns East,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 1 June 1896, 1.

of his organisers and supporters. By establishing these political partnerships, McCarthy demonstrated that brokering deals, making friendships, and even alliances were central to his campaign. Campaign management (which McCarthy knew and which his allies knew) was of central significance to a successful campaign.<sup>80</sup> Certainly, even McCarthy campaigned on other issues than education. National Schools comprised just one of the issues that McCarthy drew upon to increase voter awareness and support. McCarthy pitched the McCarthyite League as an alternative to the traditional two-party system.

### **Conclusion**

For the Patrons of Industry and D'Alton McCarthy, election strategy was rooted in two key factors. First, candidates from both groups worked heavily around effective campaign management. Their method included making strategic alliances with important members in communities throughout Manitoba, even with the Liberal party. With respect to D'Alton McCarthy, he and his colleagues formed critical ties with C. Cliffe, Underhill, Thomas Greenway, Joseph Martin, and Clifford Sifton, who spoke on his behalf at numerous meetings. It also shows that McCarthy was a master organiser by having brokered deals with influential members of the Manitoba community and by developing close political ties with influential residents of Brandon and Winnipeg.

The second method election strategy was working with election issues to increase voter support. These issues were tools used to differentiate these "third parties" from the Tories and the Grits. The analysis of campaign meetings of the Patrons of Industry indicates that candidates, with the help of their campaign organisers, worked hard to promote a real alternative to the Canadian two-party system. Education was not a dominating campaign issue in the

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<sup>80</sup> "Meeting at Hartney," *Manitoba Free Press*, 13 June 1896, 5; "Mr. McCarthy is their Choice," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 15 June 1896, 2.

Patrons of Industry and D'Alton McCarthy's platform. The trade policies and relationship between the Dominion, Britain, and the United States and the construction of railway outlets to the United States and to the Hudson Bay were actually more important. Other campaign issues that were touched on throughout the campaign were prohibition, male and female suffrage, senate reform, and immigration. This chapter has shown that the challenges these third parties faced in the campaign were great, because their beliefs were responsive to the farmers' demands for structural reform of Canada. It was with these hopes that third parties wanted to bring change to the two-party system.

## CHAPTER V: What Decided the 1896 Election in Manitoba?

What decided the outcome of the 1896 federal election in Manitoba? Was it mainly the result of campaign organization and campaigning? Alternatively, was it chiefly the result of candidate and party positions on crucial policies, especially remedial legislation? This thesis has investigated the ways that candidates brokered deals with leaders of the community for “vote-getting appeal” and organisers volunteered at campaign rallies. It has shown how much effort candidates put into such key issues as railways and tariffs as well as education. The thesis has described the policy issues that distinguished the Patrons of Industry, the McCarthyite League, the Liberals, and the Conservatives from each other and showed how candidates and campaign supporters mobilised support in order to gain support. Most importantly, this thesis has shown that the Manitoba campaign was not a referendum on education, but can only be understood and interpreted as the result of a mix of policy themes and policy tactics.

### The Fallout

In the 1896 federal election contest, the Liberal party defeated the incumbent Conservative government. The *Toronto Globe* depicted the defeat of Charles Tupper and the Conservative government as the symbolic beheading of Charles I and the end of tyrannical rule in Canada. In the caption to the left read, “he was prepared to adopt and persist in the most extreme measures.”<sup>1</sup> It also read, “He held equivocation to be lawful in certain circumstances.”<sup>2</sup> The caption to the right said, “A warning to kings to exercise their powers constitutionally, and never to subordinate truth to policy.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Globe*, 6 July 1896, 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.



Source: *Globe*, 6 July 1896, 1.

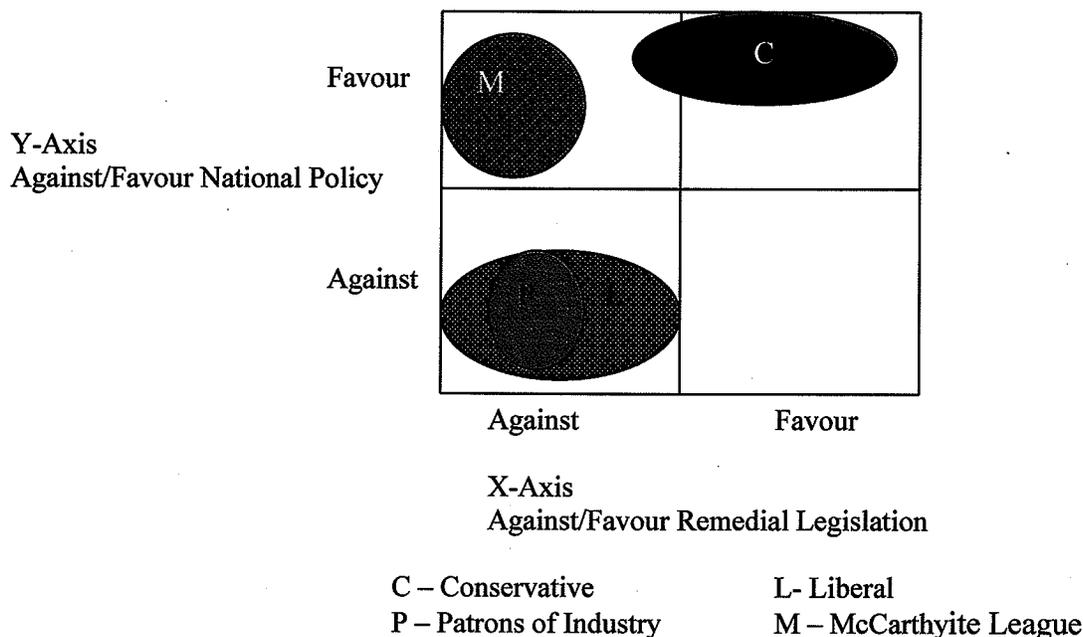
As a result of the more prosaic review of textual evidence most historians would agree that there is no question that 23 June 1896 marked a change in Canadian politics. This was not simply because Tupper and the Conservatives had lost, but because it “brought to an end the post-Confederation era in Canadian politics.”<sup>4</sup>

Political scientists use a simple matrix diagram of party policy positions in order to distinguish party positions. Figure 10 (page 101) does this for Manitoba. The Liberals and the Patrons of Industry were similar in their policy approach to Remedial Legislation and the National Policy. On the other hand, the Conservatives were on the opposite side of the spectrum

<sup>4</sup> Ray Argyle, *Turning Points: The Campaigns that Changed Canada and 2004 and Before*, (Toronto: White Knight Publishing, 2004), 113. See also John English, *The Decline of Politics: The Conservatives and the Party System, 1901-1920*.

with regard to these issues. Only McCarthy and his associates stood out because he was strongly in favour of the National Policy, while strongly against Remedial Legislation.

**Figure 10 - Bi-Dimensional Political Party Space in Manitoba: National Policy and Remedial Legislation**



In the provincial election held only six months earlier on 15 January 1896, the Liberals swept Manitoba by capturing 29 seats in the Manitoba Legislature, while the Conservatives received 5, Patrons of Industry 2, and Independents 3 (see Figures 1 and 2). In the provincial election, Liberals received 9,720 (49.5% of the popular vote) votes, while the Conservatives received 7,360 (37.5%), the Patrons of Industry 2,025 (10.3%), and Independents 526 (2.7%) (see Appendix, Tables 3 and 4). The rapid shift of electoral support from an anti-Remedial, anti-interventionist, and provincial-rights Liberal party to a Remedial, interventionist and centralist Conservative party between January and June of 1896 is the phenomenon that this thesis investigates.

## The Conservative Party

Among the Conservative candidates, voters elected Hugh Macdonald, William Roche, Alphonse Alfred LaRivière, and Nathaniel Boyd. In *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada*, Arthur Lower, then a professor of history at United College, supported and indeed paraphrased his student, Ellen Cooke, by arguing that Manitoba, the alleged ““victim” of a tyrannous central government, its electors showed themselves so completely unconcerned about the “real” issue, the “burning” issue, of separate schools, that they returned a majority of Conservatives!”<sup>5</sup> Were Lower and Cooke right in their interpretation? Beck argues that “the Conservatives were most elated by the results in Manitoba and Ontario, where they had experienced the strongest opposition. Strange as it may be, the other English provinces were more perturbed by the threatened coercion of Manitoba than was the province itself.”<sup>6</sup> All the while, critics in the newspapers and other candidates in private political correspondences argued that the Conservatives candidates prevented a fair and democratic electoral process in Manitoba.

In Macdonald constituency, the Conservative incumbent Nathaniel Boyd received 2,436 votes (see Appendix, Table 6). He defeated both the Liberal candidate John Rutherford, who had 2,038, and Patron candidate Charles Braithwaite who had 1,260 (see Appendix, Table 6). Prior to his electoral victory in Macdonald, Boyd had been defeated in Marquette in the 1891 federal election by Liberal candidate Robert Watson. Paul Crunican argues that by speaking during the campaign about the “moderate redress of minority grievances,” Boyd had sealed his victory.<sup>7</sup> With 42.5% of popular vote in 1891, Boyd had a stronghold at polling stations such Poplar Point, Burnside, Rosedale, Glenboro, Holland, and Lansdowne (see Appendix, Table 7).

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<sup>5</sup> Arthur Lower, *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977), 401 (Lower cites no specific page in Cooke’s thesis).

<sup>6</sup> J.M. Beck, *Pendulum of Power*, 79.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Crunican, *Priests and Politicians: Manitoba Schools and the Election of 1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 293.

These polls are significant because they show that that Boyd successfully relied on these same Conservative polling stations in the provincial election of 1896 to assure his victory.

In Provencher, incumbent Conservative candidate Alphonse LaRivière defeated Liberal candidate George Walton, with a final count of 1,476 to 810 votes (see Appendix, Table 6). Crunican noted that LaRivière was the candidate who received the largest “margin of victory,” where he “scored heavily with the votes of his co-religionists.”<sup>8</sup> LaRivière received 2,286 votes, out of 4,703 people on the voters list, and 64.6% of the popular vote in ridings in predominantly French-speaking communities (see Appendix, Tables 6 and 7). With a comfortable majority of 666 votes, it was crystal clear that LaRivière had electoral support in from leaders in Provencher, from people who were confident in leadership of the Conservative party (see Appendix, Table 6). On the 24 June, the *Manitoba Free Press* reported that LaRivière returned to St. Boniface and “was given an enthusiastic reception by friends. A band met him at the bridge heading to the town and escorted him to his house where the successful candidate delivered a speech thanking his friends for their work on their behalf.”<sup>9</sup> LaRivière’s political support stemmed from a Franco-Manitoban religious and ethnic block of voters sustained by support from Archbishop Langevin.

In the constituency of Winnipeg, the Conservative candidate, Hugh John Macdonald, defeated Joseph Martin by 2,954 to 2,835 votes (see Appendix, Table 6). Macdonald received 52% of the popular vote (see Appendix, Table 7). On 16 July 1896 at Montreal, a reporter asked Macdonald exactly what was the chief issue in the election. He responded to the question by saying that his victory was attributed to “undoubtedly, the school question.”<sup>10</sup> But when asked

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<sup>8</sup> Paul Crunican, *Priests and Politicians: Manitoba Schools and the Election of 1896*, 293.

<sup>9</sup> “Provencher,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 25 June 1896, 3.

<sup>10</sup> “Winnipeg’s M.P.,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 17 July 1896, 2.

to elaborate on his answer, he qualified his answer, claiming that the school question was made to be important by politicians outside of Manitoba. Macdonald was asked for a further explanation about his explanation for the shift in voter support between January and June 1896. The reporter specifically asked him, “if the school question was the principal issue, how do you account for the stand the people took during the provincial elections – a stand which showed that the electorate was overwhelming in favour of national schools?”<sup>11</sup> Macdonald stated:

At this moment, nine out of every ten people, that is English speaking people - are in favour of National Schools. Of course, all parties would like to see the question settled. It is felt by moderate people that as a grievance has been declared to exist, it should be settled as speedily as possible. And we must admit that it is a grievance that a certain section of the population, from regard to conscience should be compelled to erect separate schools, which they must maintain out of their own money, while at the same time contributing to other schools to which they cannot send their children.<sup>12</sup>

Macdonald meant here that Manitobans seemed determined that the education issue had been resolved at the provincial election, with the re-election of Thomas Greenway and the Liberals. In his view, there were other factors at stake, including the opening of a dialogue with the province on provincial rights, railway policy and the tariff. When the reporter asked, “and now, are you still of the opinion that the question should be assessed by the local authority?”<sup>13</sup> Macdonald replied, “unquestionably.”<sup>14</sup> To that remark, the reporter probed even further: “do you think it will be settled by such authority?”<sup>15</sup> To Macdonald, then, education was an important theme in the national campaign, but in Manitoba it was not. He asserted that politicians outside of Manitoba magnified and exasperated the education issue, which he claimed had been resolved in January 1896.

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

When the reporter asked about the significance of trade policy with the United States and its possible effect on the outcome of the campaign, Macdonald asserted that, “the trade policy cut no figure at all. In fact, it would not be listened to.”<sup>16</sup> Macdonald suggested that opposition to the National Policy was not the reason for the Conservative defeat in Canada. He argued that the Conservative party had strongly, perhaps too strongly, emphasised the importance of railways. “We had thought that the chief question was the Hudson’s Bay railway,” he replied, “in respect to which Sir Charles Tupper made the most lavish promises—promises which the people forgetting the leanings of conscience, swallowed greedily.”<sup>17</sup> When the reporters inquired, “was the judgment of the electorate, as a matter of fact, not seduced by this promised of the railway?” Macdonald stated, “no” with a smile. He then said that, “undoubtedly, the railway was a factor in the business, and a most important factor. You see the [Manitoba] people believe in the [Hudson’s Bay] railway. Down here [in Ottawa] it is the fashion to declare it to be impracticable. But that is not the opinion in Manitoba.”<sup>18</sup> The reporter then asked if he thought that the Hudson’s Bay Railway was “feasible” and likely to be “profitable?”<sup>19</sup> He replied, “I am not a railway man to be sure, and I could not say anything as to whether it would profitable.”<sup>20</sup> Macdonald clearly made it known that that education was not the most important issue in the Manitoba campaign, verified by his suggestions that the railroad and tariff were of greater magnitude. The main point here is that political management was an essential element to win votes. Confident from the outset of the race, Macdonald felt little direct concern on the issue.

Robert Rogers, Hugh Armstrong, and W.A. Macdonald made valiant efforts as demonstrated by the relative closeness of the swing vote. Despite their differences over the issue

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

of the Manitoba School Act, their common thread was fought over the issues of the national policy, the protective tariff and railway construction. Had Paul Crunican explained why Roche and W.A. Macdonald broke away from the Conservative party platform, would his conclusions regarding Conservative disunity in Manitoba remained the same?<sup>21</sup> W. A. Macdonald lost in Brandon, but received 2,702 votes and over 39% of the popular vote (see Appendix, Table 6). Figure 10 (page 101) indicates that there were Conservatives who broke party policy ranks. W.A. Macdonald and W.J. Roche were the two candidates who strongly defended the national policy, but who were against remedial legislation. According to D. J. Hall, W.A. Macdonald was "Sifton's long-time opponent who also favoured National Schools."<sup>22</sup> Hall does not account for W.A. Macdonald's Conservative support at polling stations in Souris, Boissevain, Ralphton, Cannon's, Gruno Tree, Rockett's, and Elkhorn, places that had not been heavily Liberal in the recent provincial election. According to the *Winnipeg Tribune*, Macdonald's position on education brought him those votes. "Even the Tupper candidate was compelled to adopt non-interference with Manitoba schools as his platform because he recognised before he was a week into the fight that if he did not do so he would simply be annihilated."<sup>23</sup> Seen in this light, Macdonald's limited success in Brandon was a result of fairly effective campaign management and a strong showing in a riding where Sifton's influence and strategies were very powerful.

In Selkirk, Conservative candidate Hugh Armstrong lost by one single vote to J. Alexander Macdonnell. Unquestionably, the turnout in Selkirk was even closer than Lisgar. There were two plausible factors that explain Armstrong's defeat. It could certainly be asserted that he returning officer and his agents, all provincial Liberal appointees, influenced the outcome. In an editorial, the *Stonewall Record* reported that the result came down to who

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<sup>21</sup> Paul Crunican, *Priests and Politicians: Manitoba Schools and the Election of 1896*, 293.

<sup>22</sup> Hall, *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900, vol 1.*, 111.

<sup>23</sup> "The Majority Was Against Coercion," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 30 June 1896, 2.

managed and organised the polling stations. The newspaper observed that “[i]n Selkirk, the deputy returning officers, poll clerks, and in many cases, even the constables were Liberals. In Rockwood, municipality this was particularly noticeable.”<sup>24</sup> The other factor was one that several newspapers commented on, the singular effectiveness of Liberal efforts to organize ethnic groups such as Icelanders and Métis in the riding.

In general, in the ridings where they were successful, Manitoba Conservatives defeated the Liberals because they ran effective campaigns including numerous rallies and meetings and they focussed on a range of themes and issues that deflected attention from the remedial question. The party’s support from prominent community leaders helped to increase voter support. It was clear, as Chapter II of this thesis had indicated, Conservatives focussed on themes that went beyond education.

### **The Liberal Party**

Throughout the sixty-day election campaign, Chapter III has shown, Liberal candidates advocated a clear party message around provincial rights, governmental reform, and the revision of the tariff. In his biography, *Clifford Sifton*, D.J. Hall argues that the Liberals lost because they were “caught off balance.”<sup>25</sup> This weakness, Hall asserts, was because Conservatives had spoke to the economic issues that mattered most to Manitobans.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, “the provincial Liberals rendered good service, but none could act as an authoritative spokesman on national policy.”<sup>27</sup> Hall admits, without much evidence either way, that “ineffective organisation” was the cause of the Liberal party’s demise in Manitoba.<sup>28</sup> In *Priests and Politicians*, Paul Crunican was most convincing when he stated that “the Patron candidates hurt the Liberals more than the

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<sup>24</sup> “Selkirk Election,” *The Stonewall Gazette*, 16 July 1896, 1.

<sup>25</sup> D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900, Vol. I*, 109.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

Conservatives, perhaps changing the result in the Marquette and Macdonald ridings.”<sup>29</sup> Beck concluded that “the Liberals suffered because they had neither the leadership nor the organization that contributed so greatly to their sweeping provincial victory in January.”<sup>30</sup> Were they right?

Alexander Macdonnell was the one of Manitoba’s two victorious Liberals. It was not until 2 July 1896, when the returning officer in Selkirk published the result showing Macdonnell winning by one vote.<sup>31</sup> This was not exactly a decisive or even clear victory. On 2 July 1896, an editorial in the *Manitoba Free Press*, reported that “Returning Officer Faughan declared that Macdonnell elected for Selkirk today by a majority of one. Mr. Armstrong, the Conservative candidate, will demand a recount. There were 34 rejected ballots.”<sup>32</sup> It was not until 10 July 1896, seven days later, after the election committee had finished the recount, that Macdonnell was declared the victor.<sup>33</sup>

Macdonnell received voter support at polling stations in Kildonan, N. Plympton, West Selkirk, Icelandic River, Seamo, St. Clements, Greenwood, and Fairford, all polling stations that voted strongly Liberal in the provincial election of 1896. The *Winnipeg Tribune* observed that Macdonnell had received strong support from the Icelandic community and claimed that this had contributed to his victory.<sup>34</sup> In fact, one voter was all it took to declare a winner. The *Nor’Wester* reported that the Métis in Selkirk had voted Liberal, but even their resolve was not enough to really defeat the Conservatives.<sup>35</sup> “The returns from Selkirk where the half-breeds [sic] are in the ascendancy, in many instances show that the vote was badly split up and what

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<sup>29</sup> Paul Crunican, *Priests and Politicians: Manitoba Schools and the Election of 1896*, 293

<sup>30</sup> Beck, *Pendulum of Power*, 79.

<sup>31</sup> “Selkirk,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 1 July 1896, 1.

<sup>32</sup> “Macdonnell’s Majority One,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 3 July 1896, 1.

<sup>33</sup> “The Recount in Selkirk,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 10 July 1896, 1.

<sup>34</sup> “John A. Macdonnell,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, 1 June 1896, 1.

<sup>35</sup> “Armstrong Speaks,” *Daily Nor’Wester*, 27 June 1896, 1.

brought about this was the incendiary speeches made by a few of the half-breed leaders who are rabid about the Government over the Riel affair.”<sup>36</sup> The *Nor’Wester* did not indicate who these Métis leaders were. Macdonnell’s victory, like that of his colleague Robert Richardson in Lisgar, was the result of their capacity to manage a wide range of tensions within the riding and divisions over controversial issues and further illustrates the importance of campaigning and organizing (including the impact of election officials) to the outcome.

During the recount period, reporters from the *Selkirk Record*, the *Winnipeg Tribune*, the *Birtle Eye-Witness*, and in fact most Manitoba newspapers, had charged various Conservative and Liberal party workers and appointees with compromising the integrity of the results. It was the result of this manipulation and management of polling stations in Selkirk, the *Birtle Eye-Witness* claimed, that explained the narrowness of the Liberal victory.<sup>37</sup> Macdonnell himself claimed that the readjustment and redrafting of boundary lines had favoured the Conservatives, and explained the marginal victory.<sup>38</sup> The *Eye-Witness* argued that the Conservatives capitalised on every means possible to win the election, using the “system of gerrymandering the divisions, everything calculated to influence the electors in favour of the powers that be.”<sup>39</sup> The *Eye-Witness* also claimed that the Conservative party made “appointees to petty offices with bribery, intent, and a dozen other pre-election practices well known to show all that our legislators have reduced the desire and work of retaining office to a science, but the measures enacted bear closer resemblance to jugglery or necromancy.”<sup>40</sup> The *Eye-Witness* even accused Conservative

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>37</sup> “Scientific Government,” *The Birtle Eye-Witness*, 23 June 1896, 1.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

candidate Hugh Armstrong of adding deceased people to the voters' list, people who mysteriously voted on voting day.<sup>41</sup>

In the battleground constituency of Lisgar, Robert Richardson was the other Liberal victor. Richardson received 2,603 votes, while his Conservative opponent, Robert Rogers, received 2,545 (see Appendix, Table 6). Squeezing approximately 50.5% of the popular vote Richardson won the riding, while Rogers received 49.5% (see Appendix, Table 7). Richardson rallied support at important polling stations located at Langvale, Wilsons, Darson's, McLellan's, Vrooman's, Shewelt, Rosebank, Winkler, Thompson, Thornhill, Bolton's, Manitou, Manitoba Premier Greenway's hometown of Crystal City, Glemon, Roland, and Cypress School. These ridings are important, because it was in these same polling locations that had consistently voted Liberal in the provincial election of 1896. These polling stations served as a baseline of Liberal support for the party.

Some Manitoba Liberals took their defeat rather surprisingly. For example, in John Rutherford's riding of Macdonald, the *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that celebrations took place in response to the fall of the Tupper government. In township of Gladstone, the *Winnipeg Tribune* reported that "the Liberals held a grand celebration here last night over the sweeping victory of the Tupper Dynasty. The demonstration commenced with a torching light procession. The Union Jack took the lead."<sup>42</sup> Local defeat was less important than national success. Losing candidates would undoubtedly have known that control of government would mean control of federal patronage and that too would benefit Manitoba Liberals.

For the remaining Liberal candidates, their combined efforts with their supporters at rallies had failed to garner enough support (see Appendix, Table 6). Losing four of seven

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>42</sup> "Demonstrations in Gladstone," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 27 June 1896, 1.

ridings and winning two by very narrow margins certainly indicates that the Liberal party were unable to mobilize voters very effectively. The *Minnedosa Tribune* had reported that “had two-thirds of the votes polled for Mr. Braithwaite been given to Mr. Rutherford, it would have not turned the scale in their favour.”<sup>43</sup> The *Tribune* stated that the reason for his narrow defeat was not only the result of the effectiveness of the Patrons in drawing upon potential Liberal support but also to some other problems with either the Liberal campaign and candidate. The *Winnipeg Tribune* claimed that the “failure to elect Rutherford is principally due the Patrons, who were misled by men who ought to know better, that they would win.”<sup>44</sup> It appeared that the main problem for Rutherford was that the Patrons of Industry were adept enough campaigners to foil his efforts, despite their very similar policies.

Liberal candidate James H. Ashdown lost to Conservative candidate William Roche in Marquette. Ashdown’s defeat might be attributed to the strong showing by the Patrons of Industry candidate G.A.J.A. Marshall, and their similar policy positions. But the *Minnedosa Tribune* stated that “in Marquette the heaviest Patron vote was from Conservative centres and if Marquette had a straight fight betwixed Conservative and Liberal, there is no doubt whatever that Dr. Roche’s majority would have been larger than it is.”<sup>45</sup> Thus a close local observer of the campaign clearly concluded that policy issues were much less important than other campaign factors, including the personal standing of individual candidates in the district.

Another factor in Ashdown’s defeat was the redistribution of Manitoba ridings in 1893. While Marquette riding elected a Liberal candidate, Robert Watson, in the federal election of 1891 for the seventh Parliament of Canada, it seemed that the riding in 1896 no longer drawn to

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<sup>43</sup> “The Patron Candidate in Marquette,” *Minnedosa Tribune*, 9 July 1896, 2.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

favour such representation (see Appendix, Figures 3 and 4). In a Manitoba by-election of 1892 due to riding redistribution, Marquette became Conservative, sending Nathaniel Boyd to Ottawa. This redistribution altered the configuration of the riding and shifted the base support of the Liberals (see Appendix, Figures 3 and 4). Despite his loss, Ashdown clearly used his campaign management and deal-making to secure the support he received. He received 2,320 votes and captured 40.9% of the popular vote, while William Roche attained 2,440 or 43.1% and Marshall received 908 or 16% (see Appendix, Table 6). With a swing vote of 120, it appeared clear that the Patron candidate had split the vote in the constituency (see Appendix, Table 6).

Joseph Martin was most outspoken about his defeat by Hugh John Macdonald. The number of voters who chose Martin was 2,835 or 48.9% of the popular vote (see Appendix, Tables 6 and 7). Martin linked his narrow defeat to Conservatives trickery and conniving acts throughout the campaign. He argued that the Conservatives pressured election officials to side in their favour and add dead people to the voters' lists. According to *The Manitoba Free Press*, approximately 100 Martin supporters banded together in Winnipeg to protest against Hugh John Macdonald's win.

The groups upon which the project will be based, it was stated to the *Free Press*, are many and one supporter said that the shortage of ballots in several of the booths was among the least. Personal bribery upon part of several of Macdonald's supporters would be proven. The meeting was held behind closed doors.<sup>46</sup>

During the recount period, Martin accused Macdonald's campaign of fraud and corruption. On 25 June 1896, Martin indicated that a shortage of ballots was found at polling stations 7, 9, 14, and 23.<sup>47</sup> Martin stated that the Chief Returning Officer of the riding prevented and delayed ballot printing. Accusations were not made official, but instead discarded by the elections

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<sup>46</sup> "A Protest Possible," *Manitoba Free Press*, 25 June 1896, 1.

<sup>47</sup> "Protest in Winnipeg," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 June 1896, 1.

committee. Martin suggested that, "there can be no possible doubt that this shortage of ballots was part of a deliberate plan to commit a fraud in connection with the election."<sup>48</sup>

Martin informed Wilfrid Laurier that several individuals took drastic measures to support a recount in Winnipeg on 2 July 1896. Martin expected a recount to commence on 15 July. Thirteen days after, he wrote another letter to Laurier stating that "we have already taken steps to collect evidence for the purpose of entering a protest and it will be entered within the time limited."<sup>49</sup> With the official complaint and protest filed, Martin remarked that "our friends will, of course, not overlook the fact that the law was changed in 1891 and the time for filing a protest is now within forty days after the polling day, instead of after gazetting, as it used to be."<sup>50</sup> During the recount phase, Martin felt that "there will be no difficulty whatever in unseating Mr. Macdonald, as a very large amount of money was used and most of the bribing was done quite openly."<sup>51</sup>

Accordingly, Martin stressed that his downfall was a result of skulduggery by his political opponents. Martin even claimed that bribery was the number one reason of his electoral defeat, specifically through the C.P.R.'s financing of the Conservative campaign. In a private letter to Laurier on 2 July 1896, Martin said, "It must have cost [the Conservatives] a very large sum of money."<sup>52</sup> In a long letter to Laurier, Martin claimed that Macdonald and the Conservative party illegally misappropriated C.P.R. funds to finance the Conservative campaign in Manitoba. Martin said that, "you can well understand then what a tremendous fight we had as before our opponents brought votes from all over the continent. There can be no possible doubt that the C.P.R. gave Mr. Macdonald the benefit of their support in every way, although they tried

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>49</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Laurier Papers*, Martin to Laurier, 26 June 1896, 4717 - 4718.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 4717 - 4718.

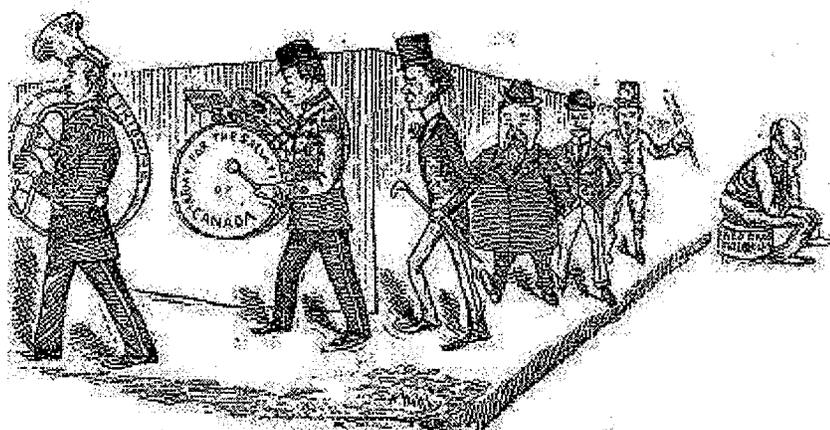
<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 4717 - 4718.

<sup>52</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Laurier Papers*, Martin to Laurier, 2 July 1896, 5200.

to hide it as much as possible.”<sup>53</sup> Martin was clear in his comments to Laurier, not issues, but electioneering contributed to his defeat in Winnipeg.

A cartoon in the *Nor'Wester* illustrates Martin's frustrations with the Liberal party's leadership and his defeat in Winnipeg. The caption read, “a few short weeks ago, I was carried on their shoulders. Today I am a squeezed lemon.”<sup>54</sup> The caption further read, “This is the state of man: Today he puts forth the tender leaves of hope; tomorrow blossoms, and bears his blushing honours thick upon him, the third day comes a frost, a killing frost and when he thinks, good man, full surely his greatness is a-ripening, it nips his root, and then he falls as I do.”<sup>55</sup>

### A TRIUMPHANT MARCH - WITH ONE LEFT OUT.



JOSEPH MARTIN—A Few Short Weeks Ago, I Was Carried on Their Shoulders. Today I Am a Squeezed Lemon.

"This is the state of man: Today he puts forth  
The tender leaves of hope; tomorrow blossoms,  
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him;  
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,  
And when he thinks, good man, full surely  
His greatness is a-ripening, it nips his root,  
And then he falls as I do."

Source: *The Daily Nor'Wester*, 30 June 1896, 2.

Disgruntled and disillusioned with the fact that Manitobans would not support a Liberal victory in the province, Martin posited two general factors to explain their defeat. First the Conservatives bribed voters and manipulated voting.<sup>56</sup> Second, the Patrons split the vote in the three ridings.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 5200.

<sup>54</sup> *The Daily Nor'Wester*, 30 June 1896, 2.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 4717 - 4718.

The *Winnipeg Tribune* noted, "it is perhaps also true that the joy of victory which the Liberal party exults in, is somewhat tempered by the defeat of the exponent of the party in this city, Mr. Joseph Martin, who stands as a sort of "no coercion" column, which was really the object voted for, rather than the personality of Mr. Martin."<sup>57</sup> There is the hint from the *Liberal Tribune* that the personal merit of individual candidates was a factor Martin did not account for.

Officially, four polling stations had waiting queues of between 130 and 170 voters when polls closed, enough to have shifted the outcome of the riding. When totalling the number of votes for Martin and Macdonald at these polling stations, specifically at polling stations 7, 9, 14, 23, Macdonald had 327 and Martin 328, (see Appendix, Table 6). In fact, when these votes have been tallied, it appears plausible that outside factors may have contributed to the Conservative victory in Winnipeg. *The Winnipeg Tribune* noted the absence of ballots at several polling stations. "In the meantime, there had been a shortage at No. 7, 9, 14, and 23. There can be no possible doubt that this shortage of ballots was part of a deliberate plan to commit a fraud in connection with the election."<sup>58</sup> Skulduggery by election officials indeed looked plausible when it is recalled that the four polling stations involved in the inquiry favoured Martin.

In sum, the defeat of the Liberal party in Manitoba was a result of several factors. First, they stressed that the redistribution of the Manitoba ridings in 1893 was advantageous to the Conservative candidates. Second, they noted electoral corruption by the Conservative party and their business connections at least in Winnipeg. Third, the Liberal party claimed that third parties in Manitoba contributed to defeat. Liberals claimed that they had organised a strong campaign involving dozens of rallies attracting thousands, including farmers ethnic groups and labour, all whom voted or wanted to vote Liberal, but nothing war further from the truth. The Liberals

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<sup>57</sup> "Protest in Winnipeg," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 25 June 1896, 2.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

were divided among themselves. Sifton's support of McCarthy led to the Liberal defeat in Brandon. Martin's odd stance on education also made voters wary of the Liberal party. It was clear that the Liberals were weak, and that infighting between Liberal factions ruined any chance of the party winning in Manitoba. Political scientist J.M. Beck was right to conclude that, "the Liberals suffered because they had neither the leadership nor the organization that had contributed so greatly to their sweeping provincial victory in January."<sup>59</sup>

### **The Patrons of Industry**

The Patrons of Industry failed to win seats in Manitoba. With three representatives jockeying in Macdonald, Marquette, and Brandon, the Patrons devised a party policy that was rooted in Canada's place in the Empire, its economic interest in North America, and in the farmers' fundamental economic role and needs. As to the issues, Patrons did not emphasize the controversial issue of education as the most decisive issue in the campaign. Rather, Patrons addressed the needs of the farmer, specifically trade with the United States and the construction of the railway, were of greater significance. Figure 10 (page 101) demonstrates where Patrons candidates stood. Their position shows how close distance the Liberals and the distance from the Conservatives. Despite their electoral shortcomings, the Patrons regarded their efforts as successful.

Patrons were under the leadership of its Grand President, the Ontarian, Caleb Mallory. The *Nor'Wester* reporter wrote that, "Grand President Mallory stated he was well satisfied with the result of the election. Of course he said that the grand board would have been better satisfied had more of their candidates been elected, but they now recognise that the Manitoba school question had obscured all other issues. If they had known this in time, very few Patron

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<sup>59</sup> J.M. Beck, *Pendulum of Power*, 79.

candidates would have been put in the field.”<sup>60</sup> The *Nor'Wester* argued then, the Patron candidates pulled together a base of support that split the Liberal and Patron vote in the province.

The Patrons' impact on the election was assessed by the *Minnedosa Tribune*. “If it had not been for the Patrons, the Liberal candidates would have been successful in Macdonald and Marquette,” argued the *Tribune*. “Casting blame right and left may to a certain extent alleviate disappointment and if it does our Liberal friends any good, may be excused in as much as it does not do the Patrons any harm.”<sup>61</sup> The *Tribune* clearly thought that the party platform of Liberals and Patrons were virtually indistinguishable to the people, going so far as to claim that,

If the Patrons had not contested Macdonald and Marquette, the result so far as the Liberals are concerned, would have been the same because in both constituencies, it is beyond either doubt or argument that the majority of votes given to the Patron Candidates were from Conservatives.<sup>62</sup>

Patron candidates in Marquette and Macdonald had a more difficult time acquiring votes because their candidates had been unable to clearly distinguish themselves from the Liberals on key policy initiatives. The *Tribune* concluded its analysis with advice “to the Liberal party that it would be better policy for them to at once recognise the Patrons as anti-coercionists and [anti] protectionists, and when referring to the results as expressed at the polls to emphasise the fact that the majority of Manitobans are split for [sic] the National Schools.”<sup>63</sup>

In Brandon, the Patron candidate, W.M. Postlethwaite, lost to political powerhouse and election favourite, D'Alton McCarthy. On 26 June 1896, *The Manitoba Free Press* reported that Postlethwaite believed his defeat was a result of “the strong school question sentiment in the constituency. The representative character of the successful candidate is this issue, and the fine organisation for McCarthy, as arranged by the attorney-general [Clifford Sifton], contributed to

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<sup>60</sup> “A Patron Speaks,” *Daily Nor'Wester*, 3 July 1896, 1.

<sup>61</sup> “The Patron Candidate in Marquette,” *Minnedosa Tribune*, 9 July 1896, 2.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

his defeat. The farmers had not much of a change in the campaign to express their opinion on questions affecting their interests.”<sup>64</sup> It was one of the only reports that editorialised about Postlethwaite’s post-election campaign. To the *Free Press*, the focus on the school question had been little more than a successful election strategy for Clifford Sifton but not a beneficial one for Brandon residents.

Charles Braithwaite fared better in Macdonald constituency than Postlethwaite in Brandon. With 1,260 votes, and a respectable electoral support, 21.9% of the popular vote, Braithwaite made it difficult for the Conservatives or Liberals to win the riding (see Appendix, Table 6). Braithwaite addressed his constituency on 27 June 1896, stating that the defeat actually demonstrated support for their farmers’ movement. “We feel keenly with the defeat of our cause at the polls. However, we have no regrets, neither do we desire to attach any blame to anyone.”<sup>65</sup> To him, it was not the Patrons of Industry’s intention to win, but to express agitation about the two-party system in Canada and the harmful effects of the national policy.

The third and final riding the Patrons contested was Marquette. Patron candidate Marshall received a total of 908 votes or 16% of the popular vote (see Appendix, Tables 6 and 7). He contended in a post-election speech that his defeat was the result of a failure to capture the attention of voters. He attributed his loss to poor electoral management.<sup>66</sup> In a remark, he noted that the Patrons were unsuccessful in breaking the ranks of the old two-party system. “Yet notwithstanding defeat,” he claimed, “we have laid the foundation of an Independent Farmers party that in the future will command respect.”<sup>67</sup> He stated that if the electorate offered greater

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<sup>64</sup> “Mr. Postlethwaite Here,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 26 June 1896, 1.

<sup>65</sup> “The Patrons Fight,” *Manitoba Free Press*, 27 June 1896, 1.

<sup>66</sup> “G.A.J.A. Marshall Speech,” *The Russell Chronicle and Free Trade Advocate*, 6 July 1896, 1

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

political support for the third party, the nation and province would enjoy an increase in economic trade and prosperity.

For the Patrons, the lack of party appeal and weak election management strategies led to limited electoral appeal. The Patrons did not organize campaign rallies that were anywhere close in number or effectiveness to those of the other two parties (see Appendix, Table 1). The Patron platform contained pledges that were far more closely linked to the Liberal than to the Conservative campaign packages. While Marshall, Braithwaite, and Postlethwaite were disappointed at the polls, as comments in the newspaper dailies indicate, Patron candidates were pleased with party stance on regional protest. The Patron of Industry positions probably policy veered too close to the Liberal platform. The Patrons promised closer economic ties with the United States, and so did the Liberals. The Patrons advocated and guaranteed the protection of provincial rights, as did the Liberals. The Patrons promised the western expansion of the railway, as did the Liberals and the Conservatives for that matter. The Patrons championed an end to corruption at the highest levels of the federal government, as did the Liberals. As a result, they could not establish themselves as a viable alternative to Liberals nor Conservatives and this is mainly reflected in their defeat on a number of election issues. In the end, the Patrons were unable to separate themselves from the party platform and issues they fought to reform. It was not their primary intention to win, as much to express their agitation towards the traditional two-party system in Canada. They managed to do exactly this by splitting the votes and validations a third alternative.

### **McCarthy and his League**

In the battleground of Brandon, D'Alton McCarthy was no political amateur. He keyed his victory to electoral strategy, particularly paying respect to the help of Clifford Sifton, M.L.A.

A man of great political craft, D'Alton McCarthy received 3,006 votes and 44.2% of the popular vote while spending a mere ten days campaigning in Manitoba (see Appendix, Table 6).

During the campaign, McCarthy conceded to his political associate, Clifford Sifton, that the school question, not the tariff issue, was a critical campaign issue for Manitobans. As the reputed creator of the school question in the first place, perhaps he could have said nothing else.<sup>68</sup> But was he correct? According to McCarthy, "nothing can be surprising so far as the general result goes. The tariff question would have defeated the administration if the school question never came."<sup>69</sup>

McCarthy definitely asserted that other issues consumed the Manitoba public interest. McCarthy stated that if education had not been emphasized in the local broadsheets, constituents may have been more interested in the issue of economic ties with the United States. McCarthy acknowledged that, "a material reduction in the duties" actually mattered more to voters in Brandon. McCarthy noted that in other ridings, such as Provencher and Winnipeg, the school question may have been more important but that was because there were contingents of French-speaking Roman Catholic voters who influenced the outcome. McCarthy's position on the school question was congruent with Sifton's, but ultimately not the latter's main concern. In *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon*, biographer D.J. Hall argues that Sifton convinced McCarthy to run in the riding of Brandon chiefly in order to unseat Conservative Minister of Interior, Thomas Daly.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> McCarthy was often identified as raising the issue of the "national schools" question in the early 1890s in Manitoba. Historians tend to see his intervention as part of a broader movement among Liberal Protestant Manitobans.

<sup>69</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Sifton Papers*, McCarthy to Sifton, 24 June 1896, 3897.

<sup>70</sup> D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon*, Vol. 1, 110.

In part, McCarthy attributed his victory to the partnership with Clifford Sifton and the Manitoba Liberals. In a post-election letter to Sifton, McCarthy explained the significance of education in the campaign:

With reference to the School question, you probably know much more than I can or do as I have heard and know nothing more than is common to everybody from Mr. Laurier speeches and newspaper gossip. I am inclined, however, to think that Mr. Laurier is trusting (otherwise it is absurd for him to say that he will settle the School Question in six months) to your Government acceding to the demands of the Roman Catholic minority and apparently he is leaving the portfolio of the Interior vacant in the hope that some arrangement as that may be reached.<sup>71</sup>

Supporting Manitoba Liberals, McCarthy relied on the support of Sifton's organisers in Brandon to ensure such a victory. The journalist and Sifton ally, John W. Dafoe, emphasized that Sifton performed most of the campaigning for McCarthy. "Mr. Sifton gave much of his time and energies almost wholly to the constituency of Brandon, in which D'Alton McCarthy had been induced to stand in opposition to the government."<sup>72</sup> McCarthy "could only give a few days to the constituency owing to eastern engagements; but in his period, covered a large part of the constituency, owing to the organization which had been perfected by Sifton."<sup>73</sup>

In short, two factors contributed to McCarthy's victory in Brandon. First, McCarthy was willing to broker political deals and bank upon the support of the campaign. Second, McCarthy found that education was an important election issue in campaign, but more so in Ontario and Québec than in Manitoba. Kenneth McLaughlin was right when he emphasised McCarthy's political partnership with the Liberal party and the Patrons of Industry. "[McCarthy's] denial of

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<sup>71</sup> Library and Archives Canada, *Sifton Papers*, McCarthy to Sifton, 2 July 1896, 3906-3907; and Hall, 110-111.

<sup>72</sup> John W. Dafoe, *Clifford Sifton In Relation to his Times*, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1931,) 95

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* 95.

any agreement with the Patrons of Industry or the Liberal party was obviously false.”<sup>74</sup> It was clear that his reputation, political ability, and saleability superseded and surpassed his opponents. This could not have been achieved without the work of his Liberal organisers and the emphasis on a wide range of issues.

### **Conclusion**

The federal election of 1896 in Manitoba was not a referendum on education. Rather, it was a contest over a host of important issues that interested Manitobans. They seriously weighed their options and alternatives on provincial rights, tariffs, the national policy, and economic reform. Essentially, the outcome of the federal election in Manitoba depended on four key factors. First, the losing candidates alleged that winning candidates had bribed voters. Second, the Liberal candidates argued that the Conservatives party had adjusted constituency boundary line to favour their own candidates. Third, an undercurrent of third part support had split the vote in Manitoba and undermined the Liberals in the case of Brandon. Finally, many candidates managed a solid campaign by brokering deals or forming vote-getting relationships with high profile community leaders.

This chapter has amplified and interpreted the findings of the previous chapters. Explicitly, it posits that three factors that brought the Conservatives victory in the federal election of 1896 in Manitoba. First, campaign management, the act of brokerage politics, deal-making, and electioneering, were extremely significant in winning ridings. Second, the Liberals alleged that the Conservative party manipulated and doctored electoral boundaries. Third, the third parties or “the alternatives” to the dominant two-party system, had an undercurrent of support that split the vote in Macdonald, Marquette, and Brandon. The Manitoba Conservatives’

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<sup>74</sup> Kenneth McLaughlin, “Race, Religion, and Politics: The Election of 1896 in Canada,” PhD. Dissertation (University of Toronto, 1974), 431.

somewhat unpopular and divisive policy on education played a role but was not the most important concern to candidates and voters during the campaign. Ultimately, as Manitobans weighed their electoral options and alternatives, voters decided on the most politically astute person to represent their multiple interests in Ottawa.

This thesis has argued that campaign management and electioneering were central elements to electoral outcome. In doing so, it has examined the electoral machines, namely the campaigning methods and tactics that the Manitoba parties used to bring their parties to victory. In *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon*, D.J. Hall was correct, if off-handed, when he stated that "Conservative control of election machinery, heavy dominion government spending in the province, and corruption" explain the Manitoba results.<sup>75</sup> John W. Dafoe was also correct when he argued that federally "there was...neither the leadership nor the organization which had contributed so greatly to the January (Liberal) triumph."<sup>76</sup> With the partial exception in Brandon and perhaps Provencher, Manitobans voted in ways that indicated that the schools issue and the remedial question were no longer critical for them. Other issues had become more important to the Manitoba campaign. The newspapers and politicians outside of Manitoba propagated education as the "election issue" and brought it to the forefront of the Canadian political stage, when it really was not what mattered most to voters. J. M. Beck points out that, "if remedial legislation dominated all else [in the political discussion], but in other provinces the Conservatives avoided it as much as they could and talked about the government's record of development and achievement."<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900, Vol. 1*, (Vancouver and London: University of British Columbia Press, 1981), 115.

<sup>76</sup> John W. Dafoe, *Clifford Sifton In Relation to his Times*, 95.

<sup>77</sup> J.M. Beck, *Pendulum of Power*, 77.

A political scientist might have thought that party leaders were important to this campaign, but in the federal election of 1896 their role was constrained. For example, Laurier was still a weak leader, and he was paired with former provincial premiers running in tandem with Laurier supporters in places like Ontario and New Brunswick. Tupper was not a weak leader but he headed a party that had gone through five leaders in five years and he was seen as a kind of interim political boss. Campaigning at the provincial level was conducted by local candidates, campaign managers and organizers.

The argument in this thesis about the primary importance of election campaigning contributes to broader themes including the characteristics of the party system as recently explained by Carty, Cross and Young and the “state” system as raised most recently by Ian McKay. The primacy of electioneering and local or provincial issues in Manitoba shows clearly that a “national” party system was not predominant in the Manitoba of the 1890s. Similarly, the two dominant parties were not deeply entrenched in Manitoba. Indeed, one of the most important aspects of election campaigning that the thesis has emphasized is that the Liberal, Clifford Sifton, aided the third-party candidate and dissident Conservative, D’Alton McCarthy, in the Brandon campaign. Over the longer term, Sifton was successful in entrenching the Liberals, but he certainly relied on a third-party to strengthen his own party’s position. The argument that there was a two-party system in the late nineteenth century should be qualified by recognizing the threat if not the presence of minority-party movements. Local and provincial issues mattered.<sup>78</sup>

The tensions in the Manitoba campaign do indirectly address the kinds of developments argued over by Ian McKay in his influential work on the “liberal order framework” as a way of

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<sup>78</sup> R. Kenneth Carty, William Cross, and Lisa Young, *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000).

understanding national history since the mid-nineteenth century. The proliferation of provincial issues, chiefly focused on economic development, in the election campaign only highlights the emphasis in the new political economy of liberal capitalism that the voting public and the political parties were grappling with at that time. The continuing debates about such issues as “minority rights” as well as the appropriate strategies for economic development indicate chiefly that there was no predominant consensus about a “liberal” order in late nineteenth century Manitoba.<sup>79</sup>

Clearly, focussing on election issues was just one device candidates used to gain voter support. The Manitoba electorate was already under the impression that the education question had been resolved by re-electing Thomas Greenway and Manitoba Liberals in the January provincial election. In the end, careful electioneering and campaign management were the trump cards that led to success in the federal election of 1896 in Manitoba.

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<sup>79</sup> Ian McKay, “The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 81: 4 (2000), 617-645.

**APPENDIX**

**Table 1: Candidate Rallies by month during the Federal Election 1896 in Manitoba**

	Campaign Totals	April	May	June
<b>A. Brandon Constituency</b>				
D'Alton McCarthy [I]	19	-	11	8
W.A. Macdonald [C]	30	2	17	11
W. Postlethwaite [P]	9	-	5	4
<b>B. Provencher Constituency</b>				
George Walton [L]	4	-	-	4
A. A. C. LaRivière [C]	4	-	1	3
<b>C. Selkirk Constituency</b>				
Alexander Macdonnell [L]	12	-	2	10
Hugh Armstrong [C]	10	1	3	6
<b>D. Macdonald Constituency</b>				
Nathaniel Boyd [C]	33	-	15	18
J.C. Rutherford [L]	37	-	14	23
Charles Braithwaite [P]	5	-	1	4
<b>E. Marquette Constituency</b>				
William James Roche [C]	8	-	3	5
J.H. Ashdown [L]	31	2	16	13
G.A.J.A. Marshall [P]	11	-	1	10
<b>F. Lisgar Constituency</b>				
Robert Rogers [C]	17	-	6	11
R.L. Richardson [L]	18	-	6	12
Morrow [P]	2	-	1	1
<b>G. Winnipeg Constituency</b>				
Hugh John Macdonald [C]	37	-	18	19
Joseph Martin [L]	43	1	25	17

Source: Calculated from *Manitoba Free Press, Brandon Daily Sun, The Daily Nor'Wester, and The Winnipeg Tribune*

**Table 2: Nominal Results of the Provincial Election of 1895/96 in Manitoba by constituency**

Liberal [L] – 29	Conservative [C] – 5	Patrons of Industry [P] and Independent [I] – 5
Avondale – T. Dickie Birtle – C. J. Mickle Brandon – C. Adams Cypress – A. Doig Deloraine – C.A. Young Killarney – Hon. F. M. Young Lorne – Jas. Riddell Lakeside – Dr. Rutherford Manitou – J.D. McIntosh Minnesdosa – R.G. Myers Morden – Thos. Duncan Morris – Major Mulvey Mountain – Hon. T. Greenway Norfolk – Geo. Rogers North Brandon – Hon. C. Sifton Portage la Prairie – Hon. R. Watson Rhineland – V. Winkler Rockwood – S.J. Jackson Rosenfeldt – E. Winkler St. Andrew's – Captain Jonasson Saskatchewan – D. McNaught Souris – A. M. Campbell South Brandon – H.C. Graham Springfield – Thos. H. Smith Turtle Mountain – John Hettle Westbourne – Thos. L. Morton Winnipeg Centre – Hon. D. H. McMillan Winnipeg North – P.C. McIntyre Winnipeg South – Hon. J.D. Cameron	Carillon – R. Marion Emerson – D.H. McFadden Kildonan – H. Sutherland La Verandrye – T. Pare Woodlands – R. P. Roblin	Beautiful Plains – W.F. Sirrett Russell – Jas. Fisher Dennis – W. Crosby Lansdowne – T.C. Norris St. Boniface – Hon. J.E.P. Prendergast

*Source: Manitoba Free Press, Brandon Daily Sun, The Daily Nor'Wester, and The Winnipeg Tribune - 15 - 30 January 1896*

**Table 3: Raw Vote by Riding in the Provincial Election of 1895/96 in Manitoba**

Constituency	Conservative	Liberal	Patron	Independent	Votes Polled
Avondale	284	378	-	169	831
Beautiful Plains	-	503	527	-	1,030
Brandon	402	501	-	-	903
Carillon	239	174	-	-	413
Cypress	415	498	263		1,176
Deloraine	273	482	-	-	755
Dennis	278	354	390	-	1,022
Emerson	231	223	203	-	657
Kildonan	79	50	-	-	129
Killarney	348	578	-	-	926
Lansdowne	352	591	-	-	943
Lorne	286	283	-	-	569
Manitou	261	339	217	-	817
Morden	-	360	324	-	684
Morris	389	487	-	-	876
North Brandon	264	434	-	-	698
Portage la Prairie	417	428	-	-	845
Rhineland	82	234	-	-	316
Rockwood	449	499	-	-	948
Russell	84	62	-	-	146
Saskatchewan	315	369	101	-	785
South Brandon	138	490	-	-	628
St. Boniface	279		-	357	636

**Table 3: Raw Vote by Riding in the Provincial Election of 1895/96 in Manitoba (continued)**

Constituency	Conservative	Liberal	Patron	Independent	Votes Polled
Turtle Mountain	452	475	-	-	927
Winnipeg North	668	908	-	-	1,576
Woodlands	375	20	-	-	395
Provincial Total	7,360	9,720	2,025	526	19,631

**Table 4: Popular Vote by Riding in the Provincial Election of 1895/96 in Manitoba**

Constituency	Conservative	Liberal	Patron	Independent
Avondale	34.20%	45.50%	-	20.30%
Beautiful Plains	-	48.80%	51.20%	-
Brandon	44.50%	55.50%	-	-
Carillon	57.90%	42.10%	-	-
Cypress	35.30%	42.30%	22.40%	-
Deloraine	36.20%	63.80%	-	-
Dennis	27.20%	34.60%	38.20%	-
Emerson	35.20%	33.90%	30.90%	-
Kildonan	61.20%	38.80%	-	-
Killarney	37.60%	62.40%	-	-
Lansdowne	37.30%	62.70%	-	-
Lorne	50.30%	49.70%	-	-
Manitou	31.90%	41.50%	26.60%	-
Morden	-	52.60%	47.40%	-
Morris	44.40%	55.60%	-	-
North Brandon	37.80%	62.20%	-	-
Portage la Prairie	49.30%	50.70%	-	-
Rhineland	25.90%	74.10%	-	-

**Table 4: Popular Vote by Riding in the Provincial Election of 1895/96 in Manitoba (continued)**

Constituency	Conservative	Liberal	Patron	Independent
Rockwood	47.40%	52.60%	-	-
Russell	57.50%	42.50%	-	-
Saskatchewan	40.10%	47.00%	12.90%	-
South Brandon	22.00%	78.00%	-	-
St. Boniface	43.90%	-	-	56.10%
Turtle Mountain	48.80%	51.20%	-	-
Winnipeg North	42.40%	57.60%	-	-
Woodlands	94.90%	5.10%	-	-
Provincial Average	37.49%	49.51%	10.32%	2.68%

**Table 5: Nominal Results of the Federal Election of 1896 in Manitoba**

Conservative [C] – 4	Liberal [L] – 2	Patrons of Industry [P] and McCarthyite [M] – 1
Winnipeg – Hugh J. Macdonald Macdonald – Nathaniel Boyd Marquette – W. Roche Provencher – A. A. C. LaRivière	Selkirk – J. Alexander Macdonnell Lisgar – R. L. Richardson	Brandon - D'Alton McCarthy

**Table 6: Raw Vote by Constituency in the Federal Election of 1896 in Manitoba**

Constituency	Conservative	Liberal	Patron	McCarthy	Votes Polled
Brandon	2,702	-	1,098	3,006	6,806
Lisgar	2,657	2,601	-	-	5,258
Macdonald	2,436	2,038	1,260	-	5,734
Marquette	2,440	2,320	908	-	5,558
Selkirk	1,712	1,713	-	-	3,425
Provencher	1,476	810	-	-	2,286
Winnipeg	2,954	2,835	-	-	5,789
Provincial Total	16,265	12,319	3,266	3,006	34,856

**Table 7: Popular Vote by Constituency in the Federal Election of 1896 in Manitoba**

Constituency	Conservative	Liberal	Patron	McCarthy
Brandon	39.70%	-	16.10%	44.20%
Lisgar	49.50%	50.50%	-	-
Macdonald	42.48%	35.54%	21.97%	-
Marquette	43.05%	40.93%	16.02%	-
Selkirk	49.99%	50.01%	-	-
Provencher	64.57%	35.43%	-	-
Winnipeg	51.03%	48.97%	-	-
Provincial Average %	46.66%	35.34%	9.37%	8.62%

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*The Birtle Eye-Witness*  
*The Globe*  
*The Globe and Mail*  
*The Mail and Empire*  
*The Manitoba Free Press*  
*The Marquette Spectator-reporter*  
*The Minnedosa Tribune*  
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