

# Manitoba Act, 1870

33 Victoria, c 3 (Canada)

*(An Act to amend and continue the Act 32 and 33 Victoria chapter 3; and to establish and provide for the Government of the Province of Manitoba)*

*[Assented to 12th May, 1870]*

Whereas it is probable that Her Majesty the Queen may, pursuant to the British North America Act, 1867, be pleased to admit Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory into the Union or Dominion of Canada, before the next Session of the Parliament of Canada:

And Whereas it is expedient to prepare for the transfer of the said Territories to the Government of Canada at the time appointed by the Queen for such admission:

And Whereas it is expedient also to provide for the organization of part of the said Territories as a Province, and for the establishment of a Government therefore, and to make provision for the Civil Government of the remaining part of the said Territories, not included within the limits of the Province:

Therefore Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada enacts as follows:

1. On, from and after the day upon which the Queen, by and with the advice and consent of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, under the authority of the 146th Section of the *British North America Act, 1867*, shall, by Order in Council on that behalf, admit Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory into the Union or Dominion of Canada, there shall be formed out of the same a Province, which shall be one of the Provinces of the Dominion of Canada, and which shall be called the Province of Manitoba, and be bounded as follows: that is to say, commencing at the point where the meridian of ninety-six degrees west longitude from Greenwich intersects the parallel of forty-nine degrees north latitude,--thence due west along the said parallel of forty-nine degrees north latitude (which forms a portion of the boundary line between the United States of America and the said North-Western Territory) to the meridian of ninety-nine degrees of west longitude,--thence due north along the said meridian of ninety-nine degrees west longitude, to the intersection of the same with the parallel of fifty degrees and thirty minutes north latitude,--thence due east along the said parallel of fifty degrees and thirty minutes north latitude to its intersection with the before-mentioned meridian of ninety-six degrees west longitude,--thence due south along the said meridian of ninety-six degrees west longitude to the place of beginning.

**[ Note: The boundaries of Manitoba were extended by the *Manitoba Boundaries Extension Act, 1881* ]**

**2.** On, from and after the said day on which the Order of the Queen in Council shall take effect as aforesaid, the provisions of the *British North America Act, 1867*, shall, except those parts thereof which are in terms made, or, by reasonable intendment, may be held to be specially applicable to, or only to affect one or more, but not the whole of the Provinces now composing the Dominion, and except so far as the same may be varied by this Act, be applicable to the Province of Manitoba, in the same way, and to the like extent as they apply to the several Provinces of Canada, and as if the Province of Manitoba had been one of the Provinces originally united by the said Act.

**3.** The said Province shall be represented in the Senate of Canada by two Members, until it shall have, according to decennial census, a population of fifty thousand souls, and from thenceforth it shall be represented therein by three Members, until it shall have, according to decennial census, a population of seventy-five thousand souls, and from thenceforth it shall be represented therein by four Members.

**4.** The said Province shall be represented, in the first instance, in the House of Commons of Canada, by four Members, and for that purpose shall be divided by proclamation of the Governor General, into four Electoral Districts, each of which shall be represented by one Member: Provided that on the completion of the census in the year 1881, and of each decennial census afterwards, the representation of the said Province shall be re-adjusted according to the provisions of the fifty-first section of the *British North America Act, 1867*.

**5.** Until the Parliament of Canada otherwise provides, the qualification of voters at Elections of Members of the House of Commons shall be the same as for the Legislative Assembly hereinafter mentioned: And no person shall be qualified to be elected, or to sit and vote as a Member for any Electoral District, unless he is a duly qualified voter within the said Province.

**6.** For the said Province there shall be an officer styled the Lieutenant-Governor, appointed by the Governor General in Council, by instrument under the Great Seal of Canada.

**7.** The Executive Council of the Province shall be composed of such persons, and under such designations, as the Lieutenant-Governor shall, from time to time, think fit; and, in the first instance, of not more than five persons.

**8.** Unless and until the Executive Government of the Province otherwise directs, the seat of Government of the same shall be at Fort Garry, or within one mile thereof.

**9.** There shall be a Legislature for the Province, consisting of the Lieutenant-Governor, and of two Houses, styled respectively, the Legislative Council of Manitoba, and the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

**10.** The Legislative Council shall, in the first instance, be composed of seven Members, and after the expiration of four years from the time of the first appointment of such

seven Members, may be increased to not more than twelve Members. Every member of the Legislative Council shall be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in the Queen's name, by Instrument under the Great Seal of Manitoba, and shall hold office for the term of his life, unless and until the Legislature of Manitoba otherwise provides under the British North America Act, 1867.

**11.** The lieutenant-Governor may, from time to time, by Instrument under the Great Seal, appoint a Member of the Legislative Council to be Speaker thereof, and may remove him and appoint another in his stead.

**12.** Until the Legislature of the Province otherwise provides, the presence of a majority of the whole number of the Legislative Council, including the Speaker, shall be necessary to constitute a meeting for the exercise of its powers.

**13.** Questions arising in the Legislative Council shall be decided by a majority of voices, and the Speaker shall, in all cases, have a vote, and when the voices are equal the decision shall be deemed to be in the negative.

**14.** The Legislative Assembly shall be composed of twenty-four Members, to be elected to represent the Electoral Divisions into which the said Province may be divided by the Lieutenant-Governor, as hereinafter mentioned.

**15.** The presence of a majority of the Members of the Legislative Assembly shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the House for the exercise of its powers; and for that purpose the Speaker shall be reckoned as a Member.

**16.** The Lieutenant-Governor shall (within six months of the date of the Rupert's Land and North-Western Territory Order), by Proclamation under the Great Seal, divide the said Province into twenty-four Electoral Divisions, due regard being had to existing Local Divisions and population.

**17.** Every male person shall be entitled to vote for a Member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for any Electoral Division, who is qualified as follows, that is to say, if he is:--

1. Of the full age of twenty-one years, and not subject to any legal incapacity:
2. A subject of Her Majesty by birth or naturalization:
3. And a *bona fide* householder within the Electoral Division, at the date of the Writ of Election for the same, and has been a *bona fide* householder for one year next before the said date; or,
4. If, being of the full age of twenty-one years, and not subject to any legal incapacity, and a subject of Her Majesty by birth or naturalization, he was, at any time within twelve months prior to the passing of this Act, and (though in the interim temporarily absent) is at the time of such election a *bona fide* householder, and was resident within the Electoral Division at the date of the Writ of Election for the same:

But this fourth sub-section shall apply only to the first election to be held under this Act for Members to serve in the Legislative Assembly aforesaid.

**18.** For the first election of Members to serve in the Legislative Assembly, and until the Legislature of the Province otherwise provides, the Lieutenant-Governor shall cause writs to be issued, by such person, in such form, and addressed to such Returning Officers as he thinks fit; and for such first election, and until the Legislature of the Province otherwise provides, the Lieutenant-Governor shall, by Proclamation, prescribe and declare the oaths to be taken by voters, the powers and duties of Returning and Deputy Returning Officers, the proceedings to be observed at such election, and the period during which such election may be continued, and such other provisions in respect to such first election as he may think fit.

**19.** Every Legislative Assembly shall continue for four years from the date of the return of the writs for returning the same (subject nevertheless to being sooner dissolved by the Lieutenant-Governor), and no longer; and the first Session thereof shall be called at such time as the Lieutenant-Governor shall appoint.

*20. There shall be a Session of the Legislature once at least in every year, so that twelve months shall not intervene between the last sitting of the Legislature in one Session and its first sitting in the next Session.*

**[Note: Repealed by the *Canada act, 1982*]**

**21.** The following provisions of the *British North America act, 1867*, respecting the House of Commons of Canada, shall extend and apply to the Legislative Assembly, that is to say:

--Provisions relating to the election of a Speaker, originally, and on vacancies,--the duties of the Speaker,--the absence of the Speaker and the mode of voting, as if those provisions were here re-enacted and made applicable in terms to the Legislative Assembly.

**22.** In and for the Province, the said Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to education, subject and according to the following provisions:--

(1) Nothing in any such Law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any class of persons have by Law or practice in the Province the Union:--

(2) An appeal shall lie to the Governor General in Council from any Act or decision of the Legislature of the Province, or of any Provincial Authority, affecting any right or privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic minority the Queen's subjects in relation to Education:

(3) In case any such Provincial Law, as from time to time seems to the Governor General in Council requisite for the due execution of the provisions of this section, is not made, or in case any decision of the Governor General in Council on any appeal under this section is not duly executed by the proper Provincial Authority in that behalf, then, and in every such case, and as far only as the circumstances of each case require, the Parliament of Canada may make remedial Laws for the due execution of the provisions of this section, and of any decision of the Governor General in Council under this section.

**23.** Either the English or the French language may be used by any person in the debates of the Houses of the Legislature and both those languages shall be used in the respective Records and Journals of those Houses; and either of those languages may be used by any person, or in any Pleading or Process, in or issuing from any Court of Canada established under the *British North America act, 1867*, or in or from all or any of the Courts of the Province, The Acts of the Legislature shall be Printed and published in both those languages.

**24.** Inasmuch as the Province is not in debt, the said Province shall be entitled to be paid, and to receive from the Government of Canada, by half-yearly payments in advance, interest at the rate of five per centum per annum on the sum of four hundred and seventy-two thousand and ninety dollars.

**25.** The sum of thirty thousand dollars shall be paid yearly by Canada to the Province, for the support of its Government and Legislature, and an annual grant, in aid of the said Province, shall be made, equal to eighty cents per head of the population, estimated at seventeen thousand souls; and such grant of eighty cents per head shall be augmented in proportion to the increase of population, as may be shown by the census that shall be taken thereof in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, and by each subsequent decennial census, until its population amounts to four hundred thousand souls, at which amount such grant shall remain thereafter, and such sum shall be in full settlement of all future demands on Canada, and shall be paid half-yearly, in advance, to the said Province.

**26.** Canada will assume and defray the charges for the following services:--

1. Salary of the Lieutenant-Governor.
2. Salaries and allowances of the Judges of the Superior and District or County Courts.
3. Charges in respect of the Department of the Customs.
4. Postal Department.
5. Protection of Fisheries.
6. Militia.
7. Geological Survey.
8. The Penitentiary.
9. And such further charges as may be incident to, and connected with the

services which, by the *British North America act, 1867*, appertain to the General Government, and as are or may be allowed to the other Provinces.

**27.** The Customs duties now by Law chargeable in Rupert's Land, shall be continued without increase for the period of three years from and after the passing of this Act, and the proceeds of such duties shall form part of the consolidated Revenue Fund of Canada.

**28.** Such provisions of the Customs Laws of Canada (other than such as prescribe the rate of duties payable) as may be from time to time declared by the Governor General in Council to apply to the Province of Manitoba, shall be applicable thereto. and in force therein accordingly.

**29.** Such provisions of the Laws of Canada respecting the Inland Revenue, including those fixing the amount of duties, as may be from time to time declared by the Governor General in Council applicable to the said Province, shall apply thereto, and be in force therein accordingly.

**30.** All ungranted or waste lands in the Province shall be, from and after the date of the said transfer, vested in the Crown, and administered by the Government of Canada for the purposes of the Dominion, subject to, and except and so far as the same may be affected by, the conditions and stipulations contained in the agreement for the surrender of Rupert's Land by the Hudson's Bay Company to Her Majesty.

**31.** And whereas, it is expedient, towards the extinguishment of the Indian Title to the lands in the Province, to appropriate a portion of such ungranted lands, to the extent of one million four hundred thousand acres thereof, for the benefit of the families of the half-breed residents, it is hereby enacted, that, under regulations to be from time to time made by the Governor General in Council, the Lieutenant-Governor shall select such lots or tracts in such parts of the Province as he may deem expedient, to the extent aforesaid, and divide the same among the children of the half-breed heads of families residing in the Province at the time of the said transfer to Canada, and the same shall be granted to the said children respectively, in such mode and on such conditions as to settlement and otherwise, as the Governor General in Council may from time to time determine.

**32.** For the quieting of titles, and assuring to the settlers in the Province the peaceable possession of the lands now held by them, it is enacted as follows:--

(1) All grants of land in freehold made by the Hudson's Bay Company up to the eighth day of March, in the year 1869, shall, if required by the owner, be confirmed by grant from the Crown.

(2) All grants of estates less than freehold in land made by the Hudson's Bay Company up to the eighth day of March aforesaid, shall, if required by the owner, be converted into an estate in freehold by grant from the Crown.

(3) All titles by occupancy with the sanction and under the license and authority of the Hudson's Bay Company up to the eighth day of March aforesaid, of land in that part of the Province in which the Indian Title has been extinguished, shall, if required by the owner, be converted into an estate in freehold by grant from the Crown.

(4) All persons in peaceable possession of tracts of land at the time of the transfer to Canada, in those parts of the Province in which the Indian Title has not been extinguished, shall have the right of pre-emption of the same, on such terms and conditions as may be determined by the Governor in Council.

(5) The Lieutenant-Governor is hereby authorized, under regulations to be made from time to time by the Governor General in Council, to make all such provisions for ascertaining and adjusting, on fair and equitable terms, the rights of Common, and rights of cutting Hay held and enjoyed by the settlers in the Province, and for the commutation of the same by grants of land from the Crown.

**33.** The Governor General in Council shall from time to time settle and appoint the mode and form of Grants of Land from the Crown, and any Order in Council for that purpose when published in the *Canada Gazette*, shall have the same force and effect as if it were a portion of this Act.

**34.** Nothing in this Act shall in any way prejudice or affect the rights or properties of the Hudson's Bay Company, as contained in the conditions under which that Company surrendered Rupert's Land to Her Majesty.

**35.** And with respect to such portion of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory, as is not included in the Province of Manitoba, it is hereby enacted, that the Lieutenant-Governor of the said Province shall be appointed, by Commission under the Great Seal of Canada, to be the Lieutenant-Governor of the same. under the name of the North-West Territories, and subject to the provisions of the Act in the next section mentioned.

**36.** Except as hereinbefore is enacted and provided, the Act of the Parliament of Canada, passed in the now last Session thereof, and entitled, "**An Act for the Temporary Government of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory when united with Canada**," is hereby re-enacted, extended and continued in force until the first day of January, 1871, and until the end of the Session of Parliament then next succeeding.