

Glossary: Mounties

Glossaries have been created to provide the definition of any words that are specific to each theme area. It is suggested that teachers review or point out the glossaries to students before they examine a specific theme area. Students may access them under Student Resources.

Barrack: A building or group of buildings used to house military personnel and soldiers.

Battalion: An army unit usually consisting of a headquarters and three or more companies.

Bison: A very large, bovine mammal having large forequarters, a shaggy mane, and a massive head with short curved horns. Often mistaken with the term buffalo.

Blackfoot Confederacy: A First Nations alliance that includes Siksika, Piikani, Kainaiwa, and Aamskapi Pikuni (Blackfeet Nation).

Kainaiwa: Kainaiwa are members of the Blackfoot Confederacy, an alliance that also includes Siksika, Piikani, and Aamskapi Pikuni (Blackfeet Nation).

Boer War: A war fought from 1899 to 1902 between the Boer governments and Great Britain in South Africa. The war was over the sovereignty and commercial rights in these lands and ended with British victory.

Bright's disease: A disease marked by an inflammation of the kidney.

Buckskin: Soft, yellowish leather having a suede finish made from deerskins.

Buffalo: Applied to the North American mammal; bison is the correct name of the animal (see Bison).

Commissioner: A governmental official or administrator in charge of a department or military group.

Discharge: To release a soldier from duty.

First Nations: A term for an organized Indigenous group or community in Canada.

Gold Rush: A large movement of people to an area where gold has been discovered.

Hoedown: A Western social gathering at which music and dancing often take place.

Insubordination: The act of an inferior military officer deliberately disobeying a lawful order from a superior officer.

Magistrate: A minor official with the power to administer and enforce law within a limited jurisdiction.

Marquee: A large and often sumptuous tent, often with open sides.

Maverick: There are two main definitions.

1. Originally, it referred to cattle that have not been branded yet, usually meaning a calf that has become separated from its mother. They were usually considered the property of the first person to brand them.
2. Today, it refers to a person who is independent in thought and deed, or who refuses to “go along with the group.”

Minstrel: An entertainer who traveled from place to place, usually singing folk songs and reciting poetry.

Mobile forge: A movable furnace or hearth where metals are heated and shaped into tools or weapons.

Mortar: A high-angle cannon with a short barrel that fires shells at high elevations for a short range.

Mutiny: Open rebellion of military personnel against superior officers.

North-West Rebellion (1885): A provisional government was proclaimed in the West by Louis Riel in March, 1885, especially because of broken promises by the Federal Government to the First Nations and Metis groups. It was eventually overthrown with the capture of its capital, Batoche, on 12 May 1885. Riel was taken prisoner and later hanged for treason.

NWMP: The North-West Mounted Police was created in 1873 by the federal government. Their mission was to bring order to the frontier, encourage settlement, and establish Canadian authority in what is now Western Canada.

Piikani: One member of the Blackfoot Confederacy, an alliance that also includes Siksika, Kainaiwa, and Aamskapi Pikuni (Blackfeet Nation).

Provisional Government: A government in power or serving only for the time being or for the short term.

RCMP: In 1919, the RNWMP became the Royal Canadian Mounted Police due to the need for a permanent federal police force for Canada.

Recruit: A new member of a military force, usually of the lowest rank.

Red River cart: A small horse-drawn cart with three-foot solid wheels cut from large trees that could carry up to 450 pounds.

Re-enlist: To re-enter a military force. **Regiment:** A military unit of ground troops composed of at least two battalions.

RNWMP: In 1904, King Edward VII decreed that the name of the NWMP be changed to include the "Royal" in recognition of its excellent service to Canada.

Sovereignty: Complete autonomy and self-government by a nation.

Treaty: A formal agreement between two or more groups or states, usually in reference to peace or trade.

Union Jack flag: The national flag of the United Kingdom (or Great Britain).