

Antoine “Labelle” Azure. (b. 1794)

Antoine Azure was the son of Joseph Azure and Lizette Ma-na-e-cha (Chippewa). The family is shown as #102, on the 1850 Pembina Census. Antoine is shown as age 56, his wife Charlotte (Pelletier) is 58, children Moyese (14) and Mary Ann (13). Antoine married Charlotte Pelletier, the daughter of Antoine Pelletier and Marguerite Saulteuse circa 1818. His niece, Amable Azure (daughter of his brother Pierre and sister-in-law Marguerite Assiniboine) was married to Hunt leader Jean Baptiste Wilkie. Antoine received Metis scrip # 445B under the 1864 Old Crossing Chippewa Treaty. Antoine died on June 29, 1882 and was buried in the St Joseph’s Churchyard Cemetery June 30th 1882.

Children:

- Charles Sharllens “Peyay-shish” Azure born: May 15, 1816 in Pembina district, North West Territories, Minnesota Territory died: April 28, 1907 in St Francois Xavier, Manitoba. He first married Charlotte Allard (b. c. 1818) on February 22, 1841 in St Francois Xavier Parish (d: November 21, 1844). He next married Nancy Anne Grant (b. March 4, 1823) in 1844 in St Francois Xavier Parish. (d: 1899). She was the daughter of Cuthbert James Grant and Marie-Marguerite McGillis. They were enumerated as family #100 in the 1850 Pembina Census. Sharllens is listed as a Oshkar-bay-wis-sug or attendant similar to a Sergeant-at-Arms for Chief Little Shell III. He and his family apparently remained in the Pembina area at least until 1880, but also may have spent time in Manitoba during the early part of the 1870’s. In 1880, he and his family were recorded on the Montana Federal census at St. Peter’s Mission on the edge of the Front Range.
- Joseph “Mah-tchar-min” Azure b: 1825 in Pembina District; other possible years of birth: circa 1828, 1831, & 1831. He died in 1904 in Belcourt. He married Angelique Martel (b: 1836) on September 21, 1852 in the Assumption Mission They are identified in the 1850 Pembina Census, as living in Dwelling #101. He died before 1920 in Belcourt, North Dakota. Angelique’s father was Jean-Baptiste Martel Jr. her mother was Josephte Godon. A buffalo hunting family they lived at Pembina (Family # 101 in the 1850 census) Turtle Mountain, Lebret and St. Peter’s Mission, Montana. They had thirteen children. They were on of the Metis families arrested at Fort Belknap for hunting in Montana. November 24, 1878.
- Antoine “Tu-shish” Azure was born on May 28, 1825 in St Boniface. He died on January 31, 1914 in Turtle Mountain, North Dakota. He married Victorie Larrivie (Larivee) born 1830 in Red River; on November 5, 1845 in St Francois Xavier Parish. She died on January 12, 1889 at Standing Rock, Fort Yates, South Dakota. She was the daughter of Hyacinthe Andre Larivie and Josephte Bruneau.
- Josephte “Josette” Azure was born on March 5, 1826 at Red River Settlement. She married Antoine Brayant dit Brien Jr. (b: June 15, 1825) on January 9, 1849

in the Assumption Mission near Pembina. She was the daughter of Antoine Brien dit Brayant Sr. and Genevieve Grant.

- Genevieve Azure was born in 1831 in Red River District.
- Arsene Azure was born on November 2, 1833 in St Boniface Parish, Red River Settlement. He married Adelaide Larivie (b. 1835) on December 3, 1855 in the Assumption Mission, near Pembina. She was the daughter of Hyacinthe Andre Larivie and Josephthe Bruneau.
- Moise Azure was born in 1836 in the Red River District. He died circa 1867 in St Joseph, North Dakota. He married Marie-Leocadie-Rosalie Martel (b: 1841) on June 3, 1861 in the Assumption Mission, near Pembina. Her father was Jean-Baptiste Martel Jr. her mother was Josephthe Godon.
- Mary-Anne Azure was born in 1837 in the Red River District.

Antoine's father Joseph Azure was an employee of the North West Company in 1804 employed as a guide for the Red River District. In 1804-05, he accompanied Francois A. Larocque on his trip to the source of the Missouri River.

« He was a member of Francois Antoine Larocque's Missouri expedition to the Mandan villages which left Fort Assiniboine on November 11, 1804. They were sent out by NWC superiors to trade with that tribe. Five others accompanied them: Charles McKenzie, Baptiste LaFrance, William Morrison, Baptiste Turenne, and Alexis McKay.

« At the Mandan villages of the chiefs The Black Cat and The Grand, Azure and his companions met Captains Lewis and Clark and their Corps of Discovery, on November 25, 1804. Although the meeting of the two parties was almost casual, journals kept by Lewis and Clark, and by Larocque took note of it.¹

« Joseph Azure was put in charge of the NWC equipment at The Grand's village. By November 27th, he had traded the Mandans out of 250 skins. Francois Larocque returned to Fort Assiniboine in February of 1805, Joseph Azure is lost track after that. The department that he worked in was the Upper Red River or Assiniboine Department, under the charge of Charles J.B. Chaboillez. While in the Upper Red River he served with others who may be ancestors: Antoine Azure (probably his brother), Francois Dagenais, Pierre Falcon, Francois Larriere, and Louis St.Pierre (probably the brother of Francois St. Pierre). »

He married a Chippewa Indian, the Turtle Mountain Agency Allotment Records state that some of his children's mother's name was Ma-na-e-cha, this is probably

¹ *The Journal of Francois Larocque*. Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, c. 1981.

his wife. They had at least four children, and probably more: 1. Antoine: born about 1794; married Charlotte Peltier 2. Joseph: 1810; 1st Marguerite, 2nd Josette; 3. Agathe; Pierre Peltier; 4. Pierre: 1818 1st Marguerite Assiniboine 2nd Marie.²

Joseph Azure's St.Boniface burial record: S-26, Joseph Azure, buried 31 January 1832, died suddenly day before yesterday, age 71 years, Present: Francois Lionais and Antoine Azur his son, J. N. Ev. de Juliopolis priest.

Antoine was one of the Metis leaders elected to negotiate with Ramsay in 1851. In 1850, Major Woods reconnoitered the "North-Western Frontier of the Territory of Minnesota" at the behest of Secretary of War,³ acting as an advance man for the treaty-making expeditions to come. He described his meeting with the Chippewa Métis Indians at Pembina:

I urged them to organize themselves into a band, and appoint their chiefs that they might have some order and government amongst themselves with chiefs ...; that as they were, if the United States had any business to transact with them, there was no person to address from whom *the wishes of the people could be obtained, &c., &c.*

Major Woods also organized the French people he identified as half-breeds:

On the 24th of August these people had returned from their Spring hunt, and about 200 of the hunters came to see me. They had appointed four men as their speakers. *I told them that in virtue of their Indian extraction, those living on our side of the line were regarded as being in possession of the Indians' right upon our soil; that they were on our frontiers treated as component parts of the Indian tribes; that they either came under the Indians' laws or regulations, or formed such for themselves. I urged them to organize themselves into a band under a council or chiefs, invested with ample authority to act in their name, in all matters which might arise to affect their interests ... The next day they returned in about the same numbers, and presented me with nine names as the committee they had selected for the future government of the half-breed population within our borders.*

The Metis presented the following names as their elected chiefs and councilors: J.B. Wilkie, Jean B. Dumont, Baptiste Valle, Edward Harmon, Joseph Laverdure, Joseph Nolin, **Antoine Azure**, Robert Montour, and Baptiste Lafournaise.⁴

² Agnes C. Laut *The Conquest of the Great Northwest*. New York: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1911: 30-31 "On Larocques 1804 expedition from Fort Assiniboine to the Mandans."

³ Major Samuel Woods, *Pembina Settlement*, Executive Document No. 51, House of Representatives, 31st Congress, 1st Session.

⁴ Alexander Ramsey, Letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 21, 1850. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1850*, pp. 43-64

Dominion of Canada } Antoine Azure
County of York } of the Parish of St
Lowit } Boniface in the
County of York
and Province of Manitoba make

oath and say, as follows

1. I am a Half Breed Head
of a Family resident in the
Parish of St Boniface in the
said Parish of St Boniface
Province on the 15th day of July
1870 consisting of myself and
family and I claim as such
head of a family to receive a
grant of one hundred and
sixty acres of land or to receive
p^{er} cent for one hundred and
sixty dollars pursuant to the
statute in that behalf.

2. I was born on or about the
year 1797 at the Parish of St
Boniface.

3. Joseph Azure a french Canadian was
my father

* Lizette a half breed was my mother

4. I have not made any claim of land
or p^{er} cent other than the above in this or
any other parish in said province, nor
have I claimed or received as an Indian
any annuity money from the
Government of said Dominion.

5. I was an actual and bona fide
resident of Manitoba on the 15th day of July
1870 residing in house of my own in said
parish

Sworn before
July 1, 80

my at Winnipeg this }
A. H. [Signature] }

Antoine Azure
mark

Claim No. 3140 Scrip No. 12765
issued 1st June 1882
JCT

Scrip affidavit for Azure, Antoine; born: 1797; father: Joseph Azure (French Canadian);
mother: Lizette (Métis); claim no: 3140; scrip No: 12765; date of issue: June 1, 1882



Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell
Coordinator of Metis Heritage and History Research
Louis Riel Institute