

Antoine Desjarlais. (1794-1872)

Antoine was the mixed-blood son of Old Joseph Desjarlais (b. 1754), a fur trader from Lower Canada and his wife, Okimaskwew. They married in 1785 in Manitoba. The family resided on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains as well as at Lesser Slave Lake and Lac la Biche. Antoine was Fort Interpreter at Lesser Slave Lake but eventually moved east where he established independent trading operations at Fort Desjarlais on the Souris River, near Brandon, and another small post on the Souris near present-day Minot, North Dakota. The northern post was operated with his brother Marcel, his son, Baptiste and sons-in-law Charles DeMontigny, Eusebe Ledoux and Simon Blondeau. The rest of his relations apparently settled in the Metis community of Baie St. Paul (later St. François Xavier). Antoine was married first to Marie Alexis and then to Catherine Allary.

In 1869, several clan members migrated to the Qu'Appelle River valley. Most notable was Baptiste "Nishecabo" Desjarlais who located at Little Fork on Qu'Appelle Lake. His brother Joseph Jr. (b. ca. 1792) was married to Josephte "Suzette" Cardinal at Lac la Biche in 1820. In his old age (1871) Antoine went to live at Father Decorbey's Mission at Lebret on the shore of Qu'Appelle Lake.



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