

Gregoire Brayant *dit* Brien. (1862-1953)

Gregory Brien was born on April 7, 1862, at what is now the St. John area, the son of Antoine Brien and Josephte Azure. He married Nancy Cardinal, the daughter of Narcisse Cardinal and Marie Bruneau on September 26, 1889 in Montana. After their marriage they returned to the Belcourt area. They had nine children. Gregory died at Belcourt, April 8, 1953.

Laura Thompson Law's book *History of Rolette County North Dakota and Yarns of the Pioneers*¹ gives the following family history:

Gregory Brien was born at St. Jo, North Dakota, in 1860 [sic]. He remembers that the land was laid out in strips two miles long fronting on the river so that everyone had a river front. His father was Antoine Brien [b. 1820], who wandered all over North Dakota, Minnesota and Montana. Gregory believes his father was buried somewhere in the Red River country. Gregory was about eight years old when the family moved to Fort Totten. The log fort stood on the north hill, as the brick fort was just being built. Gregory's father helped make the bricks for the fort. When the Briens came back to the Turtle Mountains there was only one family along the foothills. The Briens had quite a herd of cattle and late in the fall were busy putting up hay. Their place was near the present Ed Johnson farm where Jim Jollie formerly lived. Gregory followed the buffalo herds into Montana and was for several years at Poplar and Fort Benton, returning later to Turtle Mountains, where he still lives.



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¹ Rolla, N.D.: Rolla Centennial Committee, 1989 reprint of the 1953 book; pg. 190.