

Dakota-Metis Battle on the Grand Coteau: 1851

By Lawrence Barkwell¹

This battle took place between a Metis buffalo hunting party from St. François Xavier, led by Jean Baptiste Falcon and the Cut Head (Pabaksa) Yanktonai (Ihanktonwanna), Dakota, led by Chief Medicine (Sacred) Bear, on July 15 to 16, 1851.

On Wednesday July 27, 2011 Dr. Alan Ronaghan from Edmonton, Alberta acted as guide to take us to the location of this battle. Accompanying Dr. Ronaghan were Lawrence Barkwell, Louis Riel Institute; Gene Lafromboise, from Turtle Mountain Community College and resident of Belcourt, North Dakota; and Dan Goodon, Turtle Mountain Metis and resident of Boisevain, Manitoba. Dr. Ronaghan had researched this site originally in 1987 and with the help of the landowners located the battlefield. Since the site is on private land we are not identifying it other than that it is near a historic Metis cart trail south of the big bend of the Souris River, on the north slope of the Grand Coteau of the Missouri River. We are grateful to the family for allowing us to access their property and for assisting us with directions.



Alan Ronaghan, Lawrence Barkwell, Gene Lafromboise, photo by Dan Goodon.

¹ Assistance with genealogies was provided by Brenda Snider and Larry Haag.



Gene Lafromboise, Alan Ronaghan, Dan Goodon, photo by L. Barkwell

We convened a follow-up meeting to discuss our findings at Metis Fest in the International Peace Gardens on August 26-27, 2011. Present at that time were, Louis Garcia, honorary Tribal Historian, Mni Wakan Oyate, Hilda Red Fox Garcia, Mni Wakan Oyate, Elder Gene Lafromboise, Turtle Mountain Band, Elder Larry Haag, former president of the board of the Metis Resource Centre in Winnipeg and Dr. Nicholas Vrooman, from Helena, Montana, former State Folklorist for the states of North Dakota and Montana.

Events of July 12 to 15, 1851

The account used by Dr. Allen Ronaghan to locate the events is that of the St. François Xavier Hunt Brigade lead by Jean Baptiste Falcon.² This is supplemented by the accounts of men with the other brigade. Dr. Ronaghan locates the battlefield in the vicinity of the tributaries of Blacktail Creek and just west of the upper reaches of the Wintering River watershed. In 1987, they located the Red river Cart trail, and a large central pit surrounded by a circle of what they believe to be 16 rifle pits. There are at least two small lakes located to the south.

The brigade members listed are basically taken from a story told on May 23, 1938 to Father Picton by François Xavier Falcon³, the son of 1851 hunt leader Jean Baptiste Falcon. He says the man killed was Louison Morin, vs. the usual account that Jean Baptiste Malaterre was the one killed. Falcon is confused since he is telling his father's story some 87 years after the event. Picton's account says the event happened 85 years previous, when it was clearly 87 years later, i.e. 1851, not 1853.

Francois Falcon locates Louison Morin with the St. François Xavier Brigade when he was probably with the Pembina/Red River brigade since Jean Baptiste Morin, his older brother (b. 1834) lived at St. Joseph's. Like Malaterre, Jean Baptiste Morin⁴ was killed by the Sioux, but much later in 1875. Jean Baptiste's brother Louison Morin (b. 1837) was married to Marguerite Gosselin, daughter of Francois Gosselin and Suzanne Lafournaise in 1862 at St. Norbert. He was a plains hunter but lived into the 1890s.

² Father Lacombe was one of two priests on the 1851 hunt and at age 24 was with Jean Baptiste Wilkie's larger group Pembina/Red River brigade in 1851.

³ Note that Francois Xavier Falcon was born in 1861, some ten years after this event occurred.

⁴ Jean Baptiste Morin dit Comtois. (1834-1875) Jean Baptiste Morin was born on November 21, 1834 at St. Boniface, the son of Antoine Morin (b. 1809) and Therese Larocque.⁴ Baptiste married Nancy Delorme (b. 1841), the daughter of Joseph "Akkway" Delorme⁴ and Isabelle Gourneau on June 16, 1862 at Pembina. Isabelle's father was a counselor to Chiefs Little Shell II and III and her brother "Kar-yence" (Joseph Jr.) in turn was a counselor to Chief Little Shell III.⁴

Jean Baptiste and Nancy were a buffalo hunting family. They had four children between 1865 and 1872, born at Red River, St. Joseph, and Wood Mountain. Jean Baptiste was killed by the Sioux at St. Joseph Mountain on July 5, 1875.



Alan Ronaghan in old Red River Cart trail, 1987.



Shirley Ronaghan in Pit #17, 1987



Shirley Ronaghan in Pit #12, 1987



Small lake in a coulee beside the battlefield. Photo by L. Barkwell, 2011.

The account lists Jean Baptiste Falcon as Captain of the Hunt, Father Lafleche as Chaplain, and Moise Breland as councilor.

Sixty families went for buffalo hunting south of Moose Mountain (now Sask.). The caravan was composed of white Horse Plains hunters.

They were as follows:

Reverend Father Laflèche, chaplain, Jean Baptiste Falcon captain, Moise Breland councillor, James Whitford also going by the name of Jimmie Francis, Mi-Vivier, Gilbert Breland, Cuthbert McGillis, W.J. McGillis, Angus McGillis Jr. J. Bte. Laviolette, Alexis Vivier, Magnus Birston, Donald Ross, Louison Morin, Rossignol, Pagé, Alexis Gervais, Charles Lagraille, Eddy Wells, André Trottier, Pierre Poitras, J.Bte. Faillant, Fidler, Wm. Thorn, J. Bte. Lafreniere, Cuthbert Patenaude, Michel Patenaud, Ledoux, Paul Gervais, Marc-Ambroise St. Math, Paul Paul, Pierre Leveille, Gabriel Leveille.

One afternoon they were scouting, they approached a few Sioux, but it was too late, they were already approached by the Sioux. James Whitford and Louison were made prisoners and spent the night at the Sioux'. Camping there was a Frenchman living with the Sioux.

Then they started preparations to defend themselves, they dug a big hole in the centre of the camp for the families and made a big circle with the carts, turning the carts the shafts up, so they made a rampart and worked all night digging trenches for the fighters outside of the rampart. Next morning they saw the Sioux coming passing by the ridge and recognized the prisoners' horses. They were about three thousands, and all of a sudden they saw a horseman coming, he was flying like a bird, and finally recognized it was James Whitford. But they could see nothing of Louison Morin. Morin, he had a poor horse and was caught by the Sioux, and shot one man dead also the horse. Then the battle started, they were all ready, they had their trenches, and Father Lafleche was in the centre singing hymns and praying and encouraging to defend themselves and their children, and when Jean Baptiste Falcon was going around acting as captain, his sister Isabelle was fighting in his place. She never left him alone during the three days battle, she would force him to rest and during that time she would shoot and she was a good shot too. Everytime they would shoot, it was sure a Sioux would fall. And they would shoot from sunrise to sunset everyday.

After the first battle we went to see if we could find anything of Louison Morin (body). He was a man over six feet tall, and when we found his body it was about two feet long, his legs and arms were cut off. We had time to give him a decent burial. But for the Sioux there was two little lakes not far from the battle ground, the water was red with blood, they were washing their dead and wounded, but we could not find a corpse left, they hid them at once. We were sure we had killed many.

On the third day, they stopped about three o'clock in the afternoon, saying it was no use for them, but if you would stop your Manitou singing, we will take no time to wipe you out. "The Great Manitou was with us..." It was because Father Lafleche had his surplice, going around among the fighters and encouraging them and singing at the same time, then they stopped fighting them, then the retreat, and Rossignol was coming after them, and pushed them with his gun but never turned to look.

This story was told by Jean Baptiste Falcon, son of Pierre Falcon the Poet living at White Horse Plains and nephew of James Colbert Grant and Pierre Falcon dit Divertissant.

Written by Francis Falcon son of Jean Bte. Falcon, and the mother was Marie Nolin.

Dated Ste. Anne des Chenes on May 23, 1938.

It was the last big battle with the Sioux, they were subdued and it's the White Horse Plain people who has done the work.

Style encore plus enfantin que les chansons de Pierriche

It is possible that this was a confrontation between the Cut Head (Pabaksa) Yanktonai (Ihanktonwanna), Dakota because the Metis were on their traditional territory. The Yanktonai, Dakota traditional territory extended from the Red River on the east, to the Missouri River on the west. From the Pembina River on the north to Lake Kampeska - Moccasin River area in the south. In 1872-73, the Sisseton – Wahpeton tribes, of the eastern Dakota sold the Yanktonai land to the United States Government. The Yanktonai, Nakota are the only tribe not to sell their homeland. To this day they are scattered on several reservations, principally Ft. Peck, Montana, Standing Rock, North Dakota, and Ft. Thompson, South Dakota. See Louis Garcia, *Message from Garcia, Brave Bear, the Cuthead Yanktonai*. Tokio, N.D., August 16, 2008.

The Metis Participants

Birston, Magnus. (b. 1828) Birston was a Scottish Half-Breed from St. François Xavier, the son of William Birston and Angélique Bercier dit Marchand. He has been described as one of the leaders of the “English Plains Buffalo Hunt” along with William Hallett. He was married to Madeleine Paul (b. 1828), the daughter of Jean Baptiste Paul and Angélique Piche. Her brother, Jean Baptiste Paul Jr. was married to Marie McGillis.

Birston had been appointed to the Council of Assiniboia on August 6, 1868. The Council existed for 35 years, 1835-1870. He was the St. Paul delegate to Louis Riel’s Convention of Forty in 1870. He later moved to Duck Lake (now Saskatchewan).

On October 10 1885, he was tried for treason-felony at Regina for his Resistance activities at Duck Lake on 26th March and 3rd April 1885. He appeared before Judge Richardson on Monday October 26, 1885 and the judge stated that although some evidence weighed against the prisoner there were some favourable points for him, and sitting as a juror he could not convict. He warned the prisoner to be more careful of himself in the future. He was the only Metis other than Riel to go to trial.

Hillyard Mitchell had left Birston in charge of his store at Duck Lake before the battle there. Birston may have looted the store and burnt down Mitchell’s house but there was little evidence.

Blondeau, Simon. (b. 1827) The Blondeau family history notes that he and his wife were present at this battle. Simon Blondeau was born on the Pembina River, the son of Louis Blondeau and Marie Louise Lafromboise dite Franche. He married Francoise Desjarlais, the daughter of Antoine Desjarlais and Marie Catherine Allery in 1850 at St. Boniface.

Breland, Gilbert. (1838) Gilbert, the younger brother to Moise was born January 8, 1838 at SFX, the son of Alexandre Duboishue Breland and Emelie Wills. He married Felicite Boyer on February 21, 1865 at SFX.

Breland, Moise. (1832) Moise was born on March 19, 1832 at SFX, the son of Alexandre Duboishue Breland and Emelie Wills. He married Sarah Delorme on January 8, 1860, the daughter of Urbaine Henault dit Delorme and Madeleine Vivier in 1860 at

SFX. Sarah's uncle, Alexis Vivier was also part of this brigade. Moise was next married to Philomene Page on June 17, 1866, she was the daughter of Henry Page and Eliza Grant.

Breland, Pascal (1811-1896) Pascal came to be known as “Le Roi de Traiteurs”–“King of the Traders.” He was born in the Saskatchewan River Valley on June 15, 1811 to Pierre du Boishué *dit* Breland and Josephite (Louise) Belley a Half-Breed. The family farmed at Red River, then in 1832, Pascal and his mother and two younger sisters moved from Red River to Grantown (St. François Xavier) to farm. Four years later Pascal married fifteen-year old Maria Grant daughter of Cuthbert Grant and Marie Desmarais. Breland's sister Marie was the mother of another famous Metis entrepreneur, Johnny Grant. Maria and Pascal raised a large family of six boys and nine girls. By 1849 Pascal was a very prosperous trader with his 380 acres of land in and around St. François Xavier. At the time he owned 12 Red-River-carts and had 22 horses. Initially, Pascal did not have legal claim to his land but later he received an official land grant from the Crown in 1882. Breland spent a considerable amount of time on the Western Plains as a free trader in areas of Fort Pitt, Wood Mountain-Cypress Hills, Fort Qu'Appelle and Fort Ellice. As a result of Pascal's extensive involvement in the trade and his wealth, he gained a social prestige in the area and he was a member of “la bourgeoisie Métisse.”

Falcon, Isabelle. (1819) Isabelle was the daughter of Pierre Falcon and Marie Grant. She married Andre Trottier, the son of Andre Trottier and Marguerite Paquette on May 7, 1839 at SFX. Her brother was the captain of this brigade.

Falcon, Jean Baptiste “Che-ma-na”. (b. 1826) Baptiste was born near Devil's Lake, the son of Pierre Falcon and Marie Grant. He was the nephew of Cuthbert Grant. He married Marie Nolin, the daughter of Augustin Nolin and Helene Cameron in 1846. He was the buffalo hunt leader for the St. Francois Xavier Metis. He died in 1910 at St. Anne, MB.

Fidler, (William). (b. 1837) William was born at SFX, the son of George Fidler and HBC employee and Nancy Black. He married Marguerite McGillis, the daughter of Alexandre McGillis and Marguerite Bottineau in 1851 at SFX.

Gervais, Paul. (1832-1868). Paul was the son of Jean Baptiste Gervais and Madeleine Bonneau. He later married Madeleine Page (b. 1836), the daughter of Joseph Page and Marguerite Morin in 1857 at SFX. Madeleine was the cousin of Francois Xavier Page also part of this brigade.

Lafontaine *dit* Faillant, Jean Baptiste. (b. 1825) Jean Baptiste was born at SFX, the son of Jean Baptiste Lafontaine Sr. and Marie Rocheblave. He married Françoise Martin, the daughter of Francois Martin and Marguerite Racette in 1845 at SFX.

Lafreniere, Jean Baptiste. (1828) Jean Baptiste was born at SFX, the son of Antoine Lafreniere and Marie Versaille. He married Ursule St. Germain, the daughter of Francois St. Germain and Louise Morand in 1849 at SFX.

Lafromboise, Jean Baptiste (1806-1870) Jean Baptiste Lafromboise was born in 1806, the son of Joseph Laframboise and Josephte (Assiniboine). Joseph was born at Mackinac in 1776. Jean Baptiste was first married to Suzanne Beaudry, the daughter of Joseph Beaudry and Suzanne Latour, in 1827. He then married Angelique Parenteau, the daughter of Joseph Parenteau and Suzanne “Cris” Richard before 1860. He died on May 16, 1870 at St. Francois Xavier. His sister Louise (b. 1807) was first married to John Wills, then married to Isidore Dumont in 1833. His older sister Marguerite (b. 1805) was married to Henry Munroe Fisher then to Jean Baptiste Dumont who was father-in-law to her younger sister Louise. Jean Baptiste Lafromboise fought at the Battle of the Grand Coteau. His telling of the history as passed down in the family to great-grandson Gene Lafromboise⁵ at Turtle Mountain Band at Belcourt, N.D.

His story is that Father Laflèche prayed for their deliverance all through the night after the fighting on July 13, 1851 and the next morning there was a thick fog and the Metis were able to escape from the Dakota, who could hear the carts but couldn't precisely locate them. A thunderstorm and heavy mist at the end of the first day of fighting is also mentioned by Father Lacombe.

Lagraisse (Legrace), Charles. Probably from the same family as Baptiste Legraisse who was a guide for the Sinclair Expedition to Oregon in 1854 and later for the Palliser Expedition in 1857.

Laviolette, Jean Baptiste. (1826) Jean Baptiste was born at SFX, the son of Charles Laviolette and Elizabeth (Cree). He married Nancy Paul, the daughter of Francois Paul and Marguerite Grant in 1848 at SFX.

Ledoux. This may be Antoine Ledoux (b. 1814), the son of Jean Baptiste Ledoux and Madeleine Sauteuse. He married Marie Falcon, the daughter of Pierre Falcon and Marie Grant in 1841 at SFX.

Leveille, Gabriel. (1841-1883) Gabriel was the son of Pierre Leveille Sr. and Julie McKenzie noted below. He married Elise Cyr dit Poitras on November 3, 1864. She was the daughter of Pierre Cyr dit Poitras. He would have been only ten years old at the time of this event. Gabriel Dumont who was also present was eleven years old. Levelille died on the prairie on April 8, 1883.

Leveille, Pierre. (1829-1884) Pierre Léveillé Sr. was born on January 14, 1829 at St. Francois Xavier. He was the son of Pierre Léveillé, born June 1783 at La Bois-St. Paul, Comte Charlevois, Quebec and Julie McKenzie, the Metis daughter of Alexander McKenzie and his wife Marie. He married Genevieve Fagnant (Faillant) the daughter of Jean Baptiste Fagnant and Josephte Monet dit Belhumeur on September 15, 1856 at St. Francois Xavier. He died on 16 February 1884 at St. Francois Xavier, at age 55.

Magdalis, Jerome. Probably Angus “Jerome” McGillis Jr. noted below. Jerome was one of the Metis scouts during the 1851 Battle with the Sioux at the Grand Coteau. On

⁵ Gene says that his father told him the story as he had been told it by his grand parents.

July 13, 1851 he and two other scouts were taken prisoner by the Indians. He and one other scout were able to escape thanks to their swift horses. Jean Baptiste Malaterre, the remaining prisoner, was killed by the Sioux.⁶

Malaterre, Jean Baptiste. (1815-1851) Jean Baptiste was the son of Jean Baptiste Malaterre Sr. (b. 1781) and Angelique Adam.⁷ Jean Baptiste was first married to Therese Comtois, the daughter of Jean Baptiste Comtois and Angelique Vallee in 1839 at SFX. They had three children. Therese died after giving birth to their third child in January 1846. He then married Louise Marchand dite Lapiere, the daughter of Antoine Marsant dit Lapiere and Louise Machegone in 1850 at SFX. They had a daughter Marie, born March 25, 1851. Jean Baptiste was killed at the Battle of the Grand Coteau on July 13, 1851 and reportedly buried either at the site of the battle or along the Sheyenne River. Jean Baptiste Malaterre's youngest sister Marie born March 31, 1839 was the mother of Marguerite Belhumeur dit Monet, the wife of Louis Riel.

McGillis, Angus Jr. b. November 24, 1837, son of Alexander "Jerome" McGillis and Marguerite Bottineau, he married Isabelle Fagnant the daughter of Jean Baptiste Fagnant and Josephite Monet dit Belhumeur, in 1858 at SFX. His cousins, Isabelle and Cuthbert McGillis were also part of this brigade.

McGillis, Cuthbert. b. December 22, 1822, the son of Angus McGillis and Marguerite Notinikabon Bottineau. Married Marguerite Delorme. His sister Isabelle was married to Edouard Wills who was also part of this brigade.

McGillis, W.J. William. born c. 1814, brother of Cuthbert McGillis, son of Angus McGillis and Marguerite Notinikabon Bottineau. He married Marie Campbell, the daughter of John Duncan Campbell and Catherine Montignais in 1836 at SFX. William was employed as a plains hunter by the HBC.

Montmini (DeMontigny), Charles. Montmini's name appears in an account from the Pembina brigade. The two men who served as witnesses to the burial of Malaterre were reported to be, Pascal Breland and Charles Montmini. This man is actually Charles DeMontigny born November 12, 1819, the son of Rene Ovide Testard Seur de Montigny and Josephite Fagnant. Charles married Marie Desjarlais circa 1841. She was the daughter of Antoine Desjarlais and Marie Catherine Allary. Their daughter Marie later married Edward Welsh Jr. who was also part of this hunting party.

Pagé, François Xavier. (1833-1912) François Xavier was born at St. François Xavier. He was the son of Joseph Pagé Sr. (b. 1783) and his second wife Agathe Letendré (b. 1790). François Xavier married Philomène Lavallée (b. 1843). He was a representative to the Convention of Forty and served on Riel's Red River Council in 1870 representing his home district of St. Francois Xavier. During the Reign of Terror by the Red River

⁶ Rev. A.G. Morice, translated by Peter J. Gagne. *French Canadians of the West*. CD ROM version. St. Boniface: OMI, 1908: 329.

⁷ Likely the daughter of Jean Baptiste Adam and Josephite "Montagnaise." Her brother Joseph Adam (b. 1792 at Red River) was employed with the HBC as a mail carrier. He lived in St. Norbert.

Expeditionary Force following Manitoba's entry into confederation Pagé was arrested and imprisoned by Wolseley's troops along with François Xavier Dauphinais and Pierre Poitras.

Patenaude, Cuthbert. (1838) Cuthbert was born at SFX, the son of Michel Patenaud and Marguerite Zhezhegwegeweg (Ojibway). Cuthbert later married Marie Piche (b. 1842), the daughter of Louis Piche and Charlotte Genthon-Dauphinais on February 5, 1861 at SFX. This family were members of Little Shell and Turtle Mountain Band, although struck from the rolls in 1892.

“Corbette Pacnaud” was one of the Metis struck from the Turtle Mountain Band Rolls: National Archives, Record Group 75, Special Case 110, Exhibit "B": List of names stricken off from the Rolls as parties not entitled to the benefits of a Treaty with the Turtle Mountain Chippewa [September, 1892].

Patenaude, Michel. (1832) Michel was born at SFX, the son of Michel Patenaud and Marguerite Zhezhegwegeweg (Ojibway). He later married Therese Piche (b. 1837), the daughter of Louis Piche and Charlotte Genthon-Dauphinais on January 20, 1857 at SFX. He did receive Metis scrip under the Pembina and Red Lake Treaty:

HALFBREED" _LAND_SCRIP: National Archives, RG 75, Entry 364, "Treaty of APR 12, 1864, Red Lake and Pembina Half-Breeds," Scrip Stubs, Number 228 [checked], dated JUL 15th, 1873, 160 Acres, delivered JUL 16th, 1873, issued to Michael Packnaud, sent to Agent Douglass.

This family was part of the Little Shell Band and were paid annuities in 1865 and 1866:

Patnode, Michael [1866-7]
ANNUITY: MHS film M-390 (Roll 3), U.S. Chippewa Annuity Rolls:
Pembina Annuity Roll, Ais ance's Band, 1865:57
.....- 1 man, 1 woman, 5 children \$ 35 paid
Pembina Annuity Roll, Little Shell's Band, 1866:3/21
.....- 1 man, 4 children \$ 12.50pd

In 1892, Michel was one of the Metis struck from the Turtle Mountain Band Rolls: National Archives,: National Archives, Record Group 75, Special Case 110, Exhibit "B": List of names stricken off from the Rolls as parties not entitled to the benefits of a Treaty with the Turtle Mountain Chippewa [September,1892].

Paul, Paul. (1842-1888). Paul was born at SFX, the son of Oliver Paul and Madeleine Gervais. His paternal grandparents were Francois Paul and Marguerite Grant.

Poitras, Pierre. (1810-1889) Pierre Poitras was born in 1810, at Fort Esperance, Qu'Appelle Valley, Northwest Territories. His mother was Marguerite Grant, sister to Cuthbert Grant and his father was Andre Henri Poitras from St. Foye, Quebec. Andre Poitras was one of the founders of St. Francois Xavier. This was a buffalo hunting family always active on the plains. The family was quite large with relations on both sides of the

border. Andre, sometimes known as Henri died circa 1831 at St. Joseph, Dakota Territory. Pierre Poitras married Marie Bruyere, the daughter of Jean Baptiste Bruyere and Francoise (Serpente) on November 27, 1832 at St. Boniface. They had eleven children together.

Pierre Poitras was a representative to the Convention of Forty representing his home district of St. Francois Xavier. He was also a delegate to the previous Convention of 24, November 16, 1869. Pierre became one of the 24 members of the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia led by Louis Riel. On June 24, 1870, Hon. Mr Pierre Poitras seconded Hon. Mr Louis Schmidt's motion "That the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia accepts, in the name of the people, the Manitoba Act", thus entering the Dominion of Canada on the terms proposed in the Confederation Act. He would also witness the signing of Treaty Number 4 in the Qu'Appelle Valley, in 1874.

Ross, Donald. (1822-1885) Donald Ross, also known as Daniel Ross, was born at St. Francois Xavier, the son of Hugh Ross⁸ and Sara Short. He married Catherine Delorme and they moved to a claim south of Tourond's Coulee. Ross was a member of Riel's Council (Exovedate) at Batoche during the 1885 Resistance. Ross was one of the men who came to the rescue of those trapped at Tourond's Coulee:

Rossignol. Probably Jean Baptiste Rossignol dit Blue who was married to Marguerite Descouteau (b. 1834). This was a Turtle Mountain/Pembina family. Jeandron Rossignol, was on the Pembina Annuity Roll for Way ke ge ke zick's Band in 1868. Augustin, Louis, Felix, and Etienne Rasignole also took Metis Scrip under the Pembina and Red Lake Chippewa Treaty provisions.

St. Matte dit Jerome, Marc Ambroise

Thorne, William. Probably one of the sons of George Thorne Sr. (b. 1797) who was later married to Marie Lemire. George died in St. Francois Xavier in 1887.

Trottier, André (b. 1816) Andre married Isabel Falcon, the daughter of Pierre Falcon and Marie Grant. Andre was the son of Andre Trottier and Marguerite St. Denis dit Paquette. Their sons, Charles (age 12) and Michel (age 19) were likely present at this battle. Charles later became the leader of the Metis from Prairie-Ronde, south of Saskatoon; he had wintered there since the mid-1850s. Charles Trottier (born 1839) and Michel Trottier (born 1832) appear on 1863-64 Red Lake and Pembina Chippewa Treaty as numbers 444 and 457 when they were given Red Lake Half-breed Scrip in 1875.

Vivier, Alexis. (1796-1876) Alexis was the son of Alexis Sr. and Marie Anne (Assiniboine). He married Isabelle Short the daughter of James Short and Betsy Saulteuse in 1834 at SFX.

Vivier, Michel. (b. 1820) Michel was the younger brother of Alexis noted above, also the son of Alexis Vivier Sr. and Marie Anne (Assiniboine). Michel married Madeleine Fournier, the daughter of Francois Fournier and Angeliq Methote in 1842 at SFX.

⁸ Hugh Ross held HBC lot 1518 at Red River.

Welsh (Wells, Wills), Edward Jr. (1837-1919) Edouard Wills was born on August 11, 1837 at St. Francois Xavier, the son of Edouard Wells and Isabelle McGillis. His father-in-law was also part of this group as he later married Marie DeMontigny the daughter of Charles DeMontigny and Marie Desjarlais in 1863. His sister Priscille Wills was married to Jerome Lafournaise. Edouard signed a petition for a Metis reserve in Montana, sent by Louis Riel to General Nelson A. Miles on August 6, 1880.

Welsh (Wells, Wills), Edward Sr. (b. 1806) Edouard was the son of John Wells (Irish) and Marguerite Grant (Metis). He married Isabelle McGillis in 1829 at SFX. . Edouard Wills Sr. (b. 1812) is listed on the 1850 Pembina Census where Edouard Sr. is shown as a hunter

Welsh (Wills), Isabelle (McGillis) (b. 1819) Isabelle was the daughter of of Angus McGillis and Marguerite Notinikabon. Her brother, Cuthbert McGillis was also part of this brigade. she married Edouard Wills, the son of John Wills and Josephte Grant in 1836 at SFX.

Whitford, James Jr. (1829-1872) James Whitford was born in 1829 at St. Andrew's Red River, the son of James Whitford Sr. and Nancy Spence. He married Mary Robillard, the daughter of Peter Robillard and Margaret (Indian) on December 31, 1851 at White Mud River. They had ten children.

Whitford, James Sr. aka Jimmie Francis. (1792-1872) James Whitford was the son of James Peter Whitford and Sarah (Indian). He married Nancy Mary Spence, the daughter of Magnus Spence and Cristiana (Cree) in 1820 at St. John's Red River. They had thirteen children. By 1886, both James Whitford Sr. and James Whitford Jr. were among the Metis and French of Oak Lake who petitioned Archbishop Taché for a resident priest, noting that they had no one among them to baptize, marry, or bury them, and their children were unable to take catechism.⁹

Whitford, Mary Nancy (nee Spence). Nancy Spence was married to James Whitford Sr.

⁹ Archives of the Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Fonds Archevêché de Saint-Boniface, Petition pour avoir un prêtre au Lac des Chênes, October 8, 1886.



Medicine Bear



Medicine Bear 1872.