

Joseph Riel (1857-1921)

Joseph was born at the Red River Settlement on February 5, 1857, in the home of his paternal grandfather Jean Baptiste Riel. Joseph was the son of Louis Riel Sr. born on June 7, 1817 at Ile à la Crosse (Sask.) and Julie Lagimodière born on July 23, 1822 in St. Boniface (Man.). They were married on January 21, 1844. Louis Riel Sr. died on January 21, 1864; his wife Julie died on May 19, 1906.

In 1880-1881, Joseph Riel built a log home on the west side of River Lot 51 in the Parish of St. Vital where, in 1885, the body of his executed older brother Louis Riel was displayed for two days. The building has since been restored as a National Historic Site by Parks Canada.

Joseph farmed and served as Reeve of the Municipality of St. Vital (1891, 1893-1894). He was married twice, first on April 3, 1884 to Eléanore Poitras (c1866-1892), the daughter of François Poitras and Madeleine Fisher, and second on April 4, 1894 to Amanda Perreault (1874-1927), the daughter of Edouard Perreault and Genevieve Carrière. Joseph died on May 27, 1921 in St. Boniface.

Children of Joseph Riel and Eléanore Poitras:

- Marie Josephine Riel – born 5 August 1885. She married Maxime Carrière on January 3, 1917.
- Louis David Riel – born 28 January 1888. He married Anne Vermette, the daughter of William Vermette and Mary Vandal on November 11, 1913 in St. Boniface.
- Louise Sara Riel – born 8 March 1890. She married Camille Pierre Teillet on June 21, 1910.

Children of Joseph Riel and Julienne Amanda Perreault dit Morin:

- Eléonore Agnes Riel – born 25 February 1895, died March 1896
- Adelaide Genevieve Riel – born 26 October 1896, died 25 December 1899.
- Albert Honore Riel – born 26 July 1898. He married Yvonne Vermette, the daughter of Alexandre Vermette and Julienne Frobisher on January 28, 1920 in St. Norbert.
- Agnes Amanda Celina Riel – born 14 August 1901. She married Julien Vermette, the son of William Vermette and Mary Vandal on January 4, 1921 in St. Boniface.
- Joseph Riel – born 23 August 1903, died 25 August 1903
- Anonyme Riel (male) – born 15 May 1904, died the same day



Unravelling the Riel Family History

By: Bob Holliday ¹

Of all the historic figures in Manitoba, the most convoluted stories surround Louis Riel, the man who steered Manitoba into Confederation.

For starters, Riel never lived in Riel House, as the River Road building was erected in 1881, eight years after Louis left the area.

Joseph Riel, shown above, is the man who built Riel House on River Road, not his older brother, Louis, as many believe.

The house was built by Louis's younger brother, Joseph, who used materials from his mother's home near the Seine River to build on the west end of the Riel Homestead.

Some printed material claims the house was built in 1868 or 1869, which would have been quite a feat for lad of 11 or 12, since Joseph was born in 1857.

¹ Winnipeg Free Press: Posted: 12/15/2014 5:53 PM <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/our-communities/lance/correspondent/Unravelling-the-Riel-family-history-285888771.html>.
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While Louis may be the Father of Manitoba, his brother Joseph is certainly one of the many Fathers of St. Vital having served as reeve or councilor for 32 years.

Another fact of fiction discovered on a so-called genealogy website managed by "a private person" contains a photo of Joseph as a child, and lists all of Joseph's so-called children. According to the author, Joseph and Amelia saw the birth of their first son in 1869.

There are two glaring faults in the genealogy, the first of which is that Joseph would have sired his first child at age 11, in Vermont.

In reality, Joseph Riel was married twice. On April 3, 1884, Riel married Eleanore Poitras who passed away on Sept. 3, 1892. Amanda Julienne Perreault became the second, and last, wife of Joseph Riel on April 4, 1894.



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