

Pierre Mercredi. (1862-1947)

Pierre was born at Fort Chipewyan where Chief Factor of the Athabasca District, Roderick McFarlane, became his mentor. He attended school at Fort Providence until he was 14 after which he was sent to Winnipeg for four more years of education.

Much of his boyhood was spent in the company of the Cree and Chipewyan Indians. It was not surprising then that when he joined the Hudson's Bay Company at age 18. He became one of their most competent fur buyers, as most of the trappers were his friends. He married Marie Beaulieu the great granddaughter of "Old Man Beaulieu."

Between 1903 and 1913, Pierre was the manager of the HBC store at Fort Chipewyan. In 1913, after briefly considering retirement, he went on to serve as manager at Fort Smith, then Fort Rae and then on to Fort Resolution. In 1920, on the HBC's 250 Anniversary at Fort Resolution, Pierre was presented with a gold medal and three gold bars for his over 30 years of service. A huge community banquet was also put on for the occasion.

The Mercredi family always maintained a very close relationship with the church missions and in the poor hunting seasons, Pierre would always provide enough for not only his own family but also donated enough to the missions so the children would not go hungry.

Mercredi History: *Taken from the diary, unedited, of Victor Alexis Mercredi written April 5th, 1962. Permission was given by Mrs. Martha Mercredi.*

I was born in Fort Chipewyan in the Province of Alberta on the 20th January 1886 and was baptized the 21st January 1886 by Rev. A. Pascal O.M.I. whom was later consecrated Bishop of Saskatchewan.

My father's name was Pierre Mercredi. My mother's name Marie Mercredi, nee Marie Beaulieu. We were seven in the family:

- the eldest's name Pierre Isidore Mercredi
- Alexis Victor Mercredi
- Philippe George Mercredi
- Leon Joseph Mercredi
- Marie Celestine Mercredi
- Antonio Stanislas Mercredi
- Marie Colombe Mercredi

The two girls have died - all the boys are still living.

My father was born in Fort Chipewyan, Alberta in the year 1862. While young, my father associated much with the Crees and Chipewyans and had quite an influence with the Indians. He attended school in Fort Providence, NWT at the Mackenzie District until 14 years of age. Chief Factor Mr. R. McFarlane who was in charge of the Hudson Bay Company Athabasca District then, took an interest in my father and instructed him in many things. At the age of eighteen he was engaged to the Hudson Bay Company as a yearly servant and stayed in the Hudson Bay Company service for 52 years, resigning in 1932. He was decorated by the

Hudson Bay Company with a gold medal and three gold bars for over 30 years service with them.

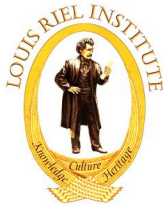
My mother devoted all her energies in raising us all and keeping us from all harms.

My father passed away the 20th January 1952 at the age of 84 yrs. and six months and both lived together for 63 years and had a very happy life.

When I was over four years old my parents made arrangements with the sisters to have my brother Isidore and I to stay at the Holy Angels Convent. After all arrangements were made with the Sister Superior for us to stay in the Convent, I noticed my mother was very busy getting clothing blankets, groceries, etc. I became curious and asked my mother why she was getting all that stuff packed up, she told me we were going somewhere but she did not tell me she was to leave us in the convent.

Reference

Overvold, Joanne. (Editor), *Our Metis Heritage: A Portrayal* (Yellowknife: Metis Association of the Northwest Territories) 1976: 71.



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