

Parenteau, Isidore “Wabash” (b. 1852)

Isidore was the son of Joseph Dodet Parenteau and Angélique Godon. He was born on August 16, 1852 at Pembina. He married Judith Plante, the daughter of Antoine Plante and Angélique Dumont at St. Boniface on June 6, 1870. They then settled in St. Laurent where their first child was born the following year.

Isidore’s older sister Judith was married to Gabriel Dumont’s brother, also named Isidore. During the 1885 Resistance Isidore Parenteau and Louis Letendré were sent 120 miles on snowshoes to the Eagle Hills in the Battle River district to enlist Assiniboine reinforcements. Isidore was one of the men who rode to reinforce the fighters at Tourond’s Coulee. In the written accounts of this battle he is referred to as “le Noir Parenteau.” Gabriel Dumont reported that Isidore arrived with a buggy, a Sioux warrior and a half-barrel of powder. After the defeat at Batoche, Baptiste Parenteau, Isidore Parenteau, Patrice Joseph Fleury, Edouard Dumont and Jean Dumont all joined the Spring Creek Métis Band in Montana. Isidore and Judith Parenteau eventually settled in Flathead territory in Montana at the St. Ignatius Mission.

Isidore and Judith returned to Batoche whenever they could. Their son Joseph died in Batoche in 1890 and the family was included in the Canadian Census of 1891. Isidore also spent the summer of 1893 at his old homestead in Batoche. In his claim to the Rebellion Losses Commission he stated that he had lost his entire homestead, a log house, two stables, a fenced pasture for five horses and fourteen head of cattle.

Their grandson, D’Arcy McNickle became a Guggenheim Fellow in 1963, the first Métis to receive this honour. Later, he was to serve as the founding director of the Newberry Library’s Center for the History of the American Indian, which was later named after him as the D’Arcy McNickle Center. He is believed to have been the first Métis university professor to teach in Saskatchewan. He was a founding member of the National Congress of American Indians. Two buildings are named in his honour; The Newberry Library D’Arcy McNickle Center for Native American History and the D’Arcy McNickle Library at the Salish Kootenai College, Flathead Indian Reservation, Montana.



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