

Vermette, François. (b. 1850)

François was the son of Joseph Vermette (b. c. 1806)¹ and Angelique Laliberte. During the 1885 Northwest Resistance, François Vermette and Napoleon Carrière were sent to Prairie Ronde to bring the Métis and White Cap's Dakota group north to Batoche. They proceeded to Prairie Ronde on snowshoes and presented tobacco to White Cap and Charles Trottier.

Norbert Welsh tells the following story:

I heard a big noise around my house... there were about forty men on horseback surrounding my house. I opened the door and two men, Carrière and François Vermette, tried to enter, but I closed and locked the door. ... the Half-Breeds spoke through the door. They told me that I would hand things out when [my friend] White Cap came along... White Cap had some of his band with him, but most of the crowd was Half-Breeds.²

The next morning White Cap returned and Welsh asked if they had orders to get his supplies. Vermette and Carriere replied that Gabriel Dumont and Maxime Lépine had given them definite orders to seize his stores. White Cap and Charles Trottier then forced him to travel north with them toward Saskatoon. There were about forty men in White Cap's brigade and about twenty in Trottier's group. Welsh got away from the group at Saskatoon. When White Cap and Trottier³ got to their camp two miles past Saskatoon they sent Welsh's brother-in-law Frank Boyer to return and get him, but Welsh declined.⁴

Vermette was a member of Captain William Fidler's company, one of the 19 *dizaines* led by Gabriel Dumont during the 1885 Métis Resistance. The Provisional Council minutes of April 16, 1885 show an order for Solomon Boucher, Modeste Rocheleau and François Vermette to go and hunt up men, arms and ammunition as far as the McIntosh farm and its neighborhood.

His older brother José Vermette was also a member of Captain William Fidler's company during the 1885 Métis Resistance. José was shot in the top of the head and killed at the battle of Tourond's Coulee on April 23, 1885.



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¹ Joseph Vermette had HBC lot 1514 at Red River. He was also known as Joseph Turpin and Toutpetite.

² Norbert Welsh (As told to Mary Weeks), *The Last Buffalo Hunter*. Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers [reprint], 1994: 157-161.

³ Charles Trottier was Norbert Welsh's uncle so he really had nothing to fear from him. Welsh's mother-in-law, Madeleine Trottier was the sister of Charles Trottier. Welsh was married to Cecile Boyer, Frank Boyer's sister.

⁴ *Op. cit.*