

**Swain, Elzéar.**<sup>1</sup> (b. 1855)

Elzéar was the son of John Swain<sup>2</sup> and Marie Allary. He married Justine Ducharme on April 6, 1874. Justine was the daughter of Jean-Baptiste Ducharme and Magdeleine Houle. They had six children born at Qu'Appelle, Cypress Hills, and Lebret. He then married Caroline Schmidt *dite* Laferté in 1883 at St. Laurent de Grandin and had three more children. Of these children, Elzéar Jr. and Rose Yvonne moved to Havre, Montana and Edmund moved to Saddle Lake, Alberta. On November 19, 1883, Elzéar Sr. had signed a petition protesting the 1883 Order in Council transferring the Métis lands at St. Louis to the Prince Albert Colonization Company. (CSP, 1886, No. 45, pp. 25-28)

He was a member of Captain Antoine Lafontaine's company, one of the 19 *dizaines* led by Gabriel Dumont during the 1885 Métis Resistance. Swain and Frederick Fidler deserted and surrendered at Prince Albert. Elzéar and his brothers, William and Thomas were all active in the Resistance.

Later, Swain was arrested on April 19, 1885, charged with treason felony but on August 4, 1885, although he pled guilty he was given a discharge by Magistrate Richardson. The Crown Attorney, Robinson, said at the time:

There are four of these prisoners, with regard to whom the Crown propose to take no proceedings, Elzéar Swain, Frederick Fidler, Andre Nolin and Daniel Parenteau. With regard to these prisoners there, are so many extenuating circumstances in their cases, although they were undoubtedly implicated in this rebellion, it is so questionable whether they acted entirely of their own free will, that counsel for the Crown thought it right not to ask for sentence upon them at all but to discharge them upon their own recognizance, to appear should they be called upon hereafter at any time.<sup>3</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> A signator to the November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1883, William Bremner petition from St. Louis de Langevin for a survey and patents to their land.

<sup>2</sup> John Swain, was the son of James Swain and grew up in the family home at Lot 163, St. Andrews Parish, Red River. John had HBC lot 1311 and his father had lots 450 and 1281. James was employed as Middleman for the HBC between 1855 and 1858.

<sup>3</sup> CSP, Vol. 13, No. 52-370.