

Augustine Vermette Abraham (b. 1918)

By Gabriel Dufault

Augustine was born on the 31st of October in 1918 on a farm in Saint–Pierre Jolys Manitoba, the eldest of a Metis family of ten children. Her father was Augustin Vermette and her mother Philomene Gladue, a daughter of Eulalie Riel a sister of Louis Riel.

Augustine’s elementary schooling at Ecole Saint-Pierre North was followed by her attending the convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names also in Saint-Pierre. She had aspiration of becoming a schoolteacher. Her plans soon changed when she fell in love with Joseph Emile Abraham. They were married in June of 1936.

They settled in Otterburne where her husband worked at Main on Saint Joseph for ten years. They then made Grande Pointe their home where they raised a family of twelve children. There they stayed for thirty-six years. Their children did well in school and several went to University. Eventually, after a very difficult winter and having the opportunity to do so they moved to the city where many of her children had already settled. Unfortunately, after only three years of living in the city her husband passed away. They had been married for forty-six years.

She experienced joys and sorrows: the joy of a very proud family, a carefree youth, and a happy marriage. In spite of being poor, she was wealthy in having a very busy household filled with laughter and “joie de vie”—joys of life—along with the sadness of loosing two sons and her husband. Following the many examples learned in her youth, she remained very interested in history either oral or written. She picked up the torch after the passing of her father.

She was elected president of the *Union National Metisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba* where again she turned her efforts to promoting not only the history of the Metis Nation but also that of Louis Riel who was her great uncle and to whom she always has a great respect and much confidence.

Augustine was much involved in the Louis Riel Centenary in 1985 as well as coordinating much of the activities marking the 100th anniversary of *Union National Mètisse* in 1987. (Contributed by Gabriel Dufault.)



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