

Jean Baptiste Bottineau. (1837-1911)

Jean Baptiste was a Metis lawyer and son of Pierre Bottineau and Genevieve Larance. He married Marie Rainville, (born January 13, 1842) at Pembina at St. Paul, on May 3, 1857. She was the daughter of François-Joseph Renville (b: 1807 in Pembina) and Marguerite Dumas Belgarde (b: 1817 in Pembina Territory). Jean Baptiste was the nephew of Charles Bottineau, who co-owned a trading post with Charles Grant at Pembina. Jean Baptiste was known as the first farmer of North Dakota. He grew up at St. Anthony Falls, now Minneapolis and it was there that he studied law.

For many years he practiced law in Minneapolis and also acted as the Turtle Mountain Band tribal attorney representing the Tribe in Washington, D.C. on treaty matters. It was Chief Little Shell III who had asked Bottineau to represent the Band to negotiate the McCumber Agreement. He was dedicated to the Turtle Mountain people and for many years served on their Tribal Business Council. The government was not pleased with this advocacy for the Turtle Mountain group and Indian Agent Waugh denied Bottineau entry to the reservation under threat of arrest, thus trying to deny the tribe competent legal counsel. His daughter, Marie Louise Bottineau Baldwin was a lawyer, the first Aboriginal woman to graduate from the Washington College of Law (1914).

All told Bottineau spent twenty years in Washington working on the Turtle Mountain land claim. He died in Washington in 1911

His daughter wrote the following memorial:

Jean Baptiste Bottineau (Boutineau), a French-Chippewa, mixed blood, successful fur-trader, surveyor, real estate broker, lawyer, justice of the peace. United States and State timber agent, sutler in the U. S. military service, and counsel and representative at Washington, D. C, of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewas, was born in the Territory of Dakota on the 3rd day of May, 1837 (-38), and after a long illness died on December 1st, 1911, at his home, 212 A Street, N. E., Washington, D C.

He was the son of M. Pierre Bottineau, the noted guide and civil and military scout, of the Northwest, and Genevieve Larance. On the 17th day of November, 1862, Mr. Bottineau married Miss Marie Renville, the daughter of Mr Francois Renville and Mrs. Margueritte Dumas Renville. The children of this union were three daughters, Marie Louise, Lillian Ann, and Alvina Clementa, the last of whom died in infancy.

Mr Bottineau was a man of great force of character, of superior intellectual ability and of a broad humanitarian spirit. He was generous to a fault, and delighted in aiding the oppressed and afflicted; he was a successful business man and in the fur trade and the real estate business he accumulated two good fortunes, which he later lost through his devotion to the interests of his tribe. The events at the close of the

civil war also contributed to the loss of his funds, for he had with his uncle Mr Charles Bottineau invested all his money in the fur business. Together they lost about \$80,000. His early life as a citizen was spent at St. Anthony's Falls, now Minneapolis, where he studied and practiced law, and held the office of justice of the peace for a number of years. About twenty years ago he took up his residence in Washington, D. C, for the purpose of representing his tribe, the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa of North Dakota, and to prosecute the claim of this tribe against the government. He spent many thousands of dollars out of his own pocket in the prosecution of these claims, for which he was never remunerated. He was a strong and consistent advocate of a liberal education for the Indian of today,—industrial, technical, professional, and moral. He strongly approved and supported the policy of the U. S. Indian Office in maintaining such schools for the education of the Indian as that at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He was in earlier years a great reader, and had dipped into books on liberal thought and on mysticism. He died in the faith of the Roman Catholic Church.

(J.N.B.H.)

Contributed by Mrs. Marie L. Baldwin (née Bottineau) in memory of her father.



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