

## **Charles “Peyay-shish” Azure, Sr.<sup>1</sup> (1816-1907)**

Charles was born on May 15, 1816 at St. Boniface, the son of Antoine “Labelle” Azure and Charlotte Pelletier. Antoine was one of the nine Metis men selected to deal with Governor Ramsey at Pembina in 1851. Charles married Charlotte Allard, the daughter of Ambroise Allard and Louise (Saulteaux) on February 22, 1841 at St. Francois Xavier. He later married Nancy Grant, the daughter of Cuthbert Grant and Marie McGillis circa 1845. He was counted in the 1850 Pembina Census as a hunter living in dwelling #100 with his wife Anne and children Charles (10), Josette (8), Bazil (4), Marie (1) and Paultner (6). He was also known as Sharlence - “Peyay-shish” Azure. He died on April 28, 1907 at St. Francois Xavier.

Sharlence was an “Oshkar-bay-wis-sug” or attendant of Chief Little Shell the younger, whose functions in Council when assembled similar to those of Sargeant at Arms, and his aides, in the United States Congress.<sup>2</sup>

Charles was born in 1816 in the Red River Métis settlement of St. Boniface Parish, Manitoba. By the early 1840’s, he was living in the Red River Métis settlement of St. Francis Xavier Parish, where he, his first wife, and two sons were recorded on the 1843 census. By the late 1840’s he was living in the Métis settlement area of Pembina County in North Dakota, where in 1850, he was listed on the Federal county census with his second wife and their children. In the late 1860’s and early 1870’s, Azure received annuities and scrip as a Pembina mixed-blood under the 1863 Pembina treaty. He and his family apparently remained in the Pembina area at least until 1880, but also may have spent time in Manitoba during the early part of the 1870’s. In 1880, he and his family were recorded on the Montana Federal census at St. Peter’s Mission on the edge of the Front Range.

Then between 1884 and 1900, he was recorded on multiple reservation censuses at the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota, where he died in 1907. Almost all of his children remained in North Dakota, either at the Turtle Mountain Reservation or the Pembina area. These individuals were more likely affiliated with the Turtle Mountain Band of North Dakota and not with a distinct interacting group of Little Shell ancestors in Montana. A few of his children remained in Montana in the 1880’s, but the available evidence did not indicate they came there as part of a group migration or settled in a distinct community of the petitioner’s ancestors. Such a dispersed migration and settlement pattern was typical of all 53 documented lineal ancestors.

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<sup>1</sup> Summary taken from “Summary under the Criteria and Evidence for Final Determination Against the Federal Acknowledgment of the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana.” Prepared in Response to a Petition Submitted to the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs for Federal Acknowledgment that this Group Exists as an Indian Tribe. October 27, 2009:154.

<sup>2</sup> Gail Morin (Ed.), *Turtle Mountain Band of the Chippewa Indians: The Protest of the Ten-Cent Treaty*. Pawtucket, R.I.: Quintin Publications, 1996: 32.



Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell  
Coordinator of Metis Heritage and History Research  
Louis Riel Institute