

## **Delorme Women**

Urbain Henault dit Delorme (b. 1798) and Madeleine Vivier had seven daughters. Their son Joseph Delorme (b. 1849) served on the court martial that condemned Thomas Scott to death during the 1869-1870 Resistance at Red River. He then served as a Captain for Gabriel Dumont during the 1885 Resistance. He was seriously wounded in the fighting and although convicted of treason was released on his own recognizance. After his death his children were looked after by his sister Rose Delorme and her husband John Pritchard at Saddle Lake.

Their son, Norbert Delorme (b. 1837) was a member of Louis Riel's Exovedate (Council) during the 1885 Resistance. Norbert moved to the North West Territory in 1874. In 1874, Norbert was one of the Metis hunters who had signed the Half-Breed petition from Lake Qu'Appelle. In 1878, Norbert and other Metis buffalo hunters at Cypress Hills wrote a petition asking for a special Metis reserve of land. Norbert settled at St. Laurent on the South Saskatchewan in 1880 and worked as a freighter for the HBC. He was a member of Riel's Council (Exovedate) at Batoche during the 1885 Resistance. Delorme's St. Laurent home served as military headquarters for the Metis campaign. Riel sent him to the Battleford area to enlist the support of the Indians in that area. On April 16, 1885, Norbert and Fine Day took some prisoners at the Bresaylor Settlement. The Indian and Metis camps were separate. The Metis leaders were Norbert Delorme and André Nault however the leaders of the combined group were Delorme and Rattler (Fine Day). Norbert led the Metis fighters during the battle of Cut Knife Hill. Norbert fled to Montana then moved to Alberta after 1885. He set up a ranching operation at Pincher Creek.

At Red River, Urbain proved himself to be a good hunter. He was prudent in all his endeavors, moderate and patient, of a calm character but firm and resolute. He was chosen captain of the buffalo hunt camp for 25 consecutive years. These camps numbered approximately 500 carts.

Urbain was an influential man in his St. François Xavier parish and in his region. In 1849, he was very involved in the trial of Guillaume Sayer and in the successful efforts of the Metis to break the HBC's monopoly of trade. His daughter Madeleine married Guillaume Sayer's son Edouard Sayer. On October 16, 1850 Urbain was appointed to the position of Magistrate. Urbain and his family lived on Lot 162 in the parish of St. François Xavier, Manitoba. At the time of the 1835 census he owned 5 horses, 10 head of cattle and seven carts.

Urbain's half sister, Angélique Delorme (b. 1800) married Antoine Bonneau (b. 1805), the son of Jean Baptiste Bonneau and Louise (Chippewa). His brother Pierre Bonneau and other Metis buffalo hunters at Cypress Hills wrote a petition asking for a special Metis reserve of land in 1878.

### **The Delorme Daughters:**

- Marguerite Delorme born 1824, married Cuthbert McGillis (1822-1906). Cuthbert was born at Lac Dauphin on December 22, 1822, the son of Angus McGillis and Marguerite Notikaban (Saulteaux). His sister Marie was married to Cuthbert Grant. He married Marguerite Delorme, the daughter of Urbain Delorme and Madeleine Vivier in 1842 at St. Francois Xavier.

Cuthbert and Marguerite lived at Victoria Crossing and traded north of Fort Pitt toward Lac la Biche, and eventually moved to Buffalo Lake, where he died on June 21, 1906 at Duhamel.

John McDougall mentions McGillis as a Metis leader:

But we had yet a long day under these conditions before we would reach Victoria, and I felt anxious as to how Bob would stand it. From my horses I fell to thinking about these people under whose humble roof we were camped. These were not settlers; no, no, only wintering. The head of the colony, Cuthbert McGillis, was a genuine type of the mingling of the two races, the careless, happy, plutocratic habitant with the nomadic Indian, the truly aboriginal man; a mixture of semi-civilization and absolute barbarism. A gigantic, curly-headed, splendid specimen of physical humanity he was, ever ready to fight anybody, but the friend of everybody. A life-long plainsman, a genuine buffalo eater, he is now away with the men of his party looking for meat one hundred and fifty miles west of here. We have been friends ever since we first met. His big, hearty ' John, my friend," rings in my ear as I write, and I often wonder that such men should ever have come to take the stand some of them did in 1870 and later. Certainly the trouble did not originate with themselves; of this my years of kindly intercourse and interdependence make me very sure. These are not the material out of which disloyalty comes as indigenous to the soil.<sup>1</sup>

The McGillis's had one daughter Betsy Pocaine McGillis (b. 1852), who married Gabriel Salois, the son of Metis hunt leader Abraham Salois and Susanne Bouvette. They eventually moved to the Metis settlement at Dupuyer, Montana.

- Catherine Delorme, born 1825, married Donald (Daniel) Ross (1822-1885). They had six children. Donald was killed during the 1885 Resistance while fighting at Batoche. Her sister, Marie was married to his brother Roderick Ross. Daniel Ross was a member of Louis Riel's Exovedate (council) as was Catherine's brother, Norbert Delorme.

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<sup>1</sup> John McDougall, *In the Days of the Red River Rebellion*. Toronto: William Briggs, 1903.

- Madeleine Delorme, born 1827, married Edouard Sayer then John McDermott. Her son Moise Sayer was charged with petty larceny for Resistance activities in 1885 but the charge was dismissed.

Marie Delorme, born 1833, married Roderick Ross, the son of Hugh Ross and Sarah short. Her sister Catherine was married to his brother Donald Ross.

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- Elise Delorme, born 1840, married Pierre Jeanotte whose mother was Madeleine Falcon.
- Sarah Delorme, born 1842, married Moise Breland. Moise was the son of Alexandre Breland and Emelie Wells and the grandson of Pierre Breland and Louise Belly. His great uncle was the famous Metis trader Pascal Breland. This family was part of the Cypress Hills Metis hunting band. In 1878, Moise Breland and other Metis buffalo hunters at Cypress Hills wrote a petition asking for a special Metis reserve of land.
- Rose Delorme, born 1847, married John Pritchard (b. 1840). John Pritchard was the son of Metis parents, William Pritchard and Marie Fleury. He was born at St. François Xavier and educated at Red River where he had taken training for the Anglican ministry. As a young adult he worked in the office of the Metis trader Urbaine Delorme. In 1863, John married Delorme's daughter Rose. Rose Delorme and John Pritchard were married on May 5, 1863 at St. François Xavier. Rose was born in 1847, the daughter of Urbain *dit* William Delorme and Madeleine Vivier.

John Pritchard worked for the HBC at Rocky Mountain House, Fort Carlton and Fort Edmonton. In the early 1880s John became an interpreter for the Indian Department and in 1884 he and his family moved to Frog Lake. John and Rose were caught up in the 1885 Resistance and events near the Fort Pitt area. From April of 1885 onward, Norbert Delorme (his brother-in-law) was in communication with him. Wandering Spirit captured John Pritchard and Adolphus Nolin. Pritchard, Pierre Blondin and Adolphus Nolin are credited with protecting the Metis and white women who were prisoners in Big Bear's camp.

### **Granddaughters:**

- Eliza Louise Delorme (b. 1859), the daughter of Urbain Delorme Jr. and Marie Desmarais, married George Joseph Ness in 1877. George Ness moved from St. Laurent Manitoba to Batoche area in 1876. He was a Justice of the Peace living at Lots 62-63 in Batoche. He was taken prisoner by Gabriel Dumont accused of giving information to the government. He was part of the group released by Middleton when Batoche fell. After 1885 they lived at Jackfish Lake, Saskatchewan and Pincher Creek, Alberta.

- Marie Rose Delorme (b. 1861), Urbain Delorme Jr. and Marie Desmarais, was sold in marriage to Charles Smith for \$50 in 1877. They ran the Jughandle Ranch at Pincher Creek, a very profitable cattle business. Her life history is told by Jock Carpenter in the book, *Fifty Dollar Bride* (B.C.: Gray's Publishing Ltd., 1977).
- Madeleine Delorme (b. 1867), the daughter of Urbain Delorme Jr. and Marie Desmarais, married Ludger Eucher Gareau who worked as a carpenter at Batoche in September of 1884. They were in Montreal at the time of the 1885 Resistance. Their home was burned down during the fighting. Her brother-in-law Napoleon Gareau was a Resistance participant.

Reference:

Doris J. MacKinnon, "I am alone in this world': The Identities of Marie Rose Smith."  
Calgary: University of Calgary, M.A. thesis, 2006.



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