

Elie Dumont (1847-1925)

Elie was born October 15, 1847, the son of Isidore dit Ecapow (Ay-ca-pow) Dumont (b. 1810) and Louise Laframboise, the daughter of Joseph Laframboise and his Nakoda wife Josephte. Elie married Marie Françoise Ouellette (b. 1847), the daughter of Joseph Ouellette and Therese Houle.

The couple had the following children:

- William Gamin, born before 1871 in Manitoba and died at Maple Creek.
- Esdras, born September 1871 at St. Laurent and died in 1873.
- Alfred November 27, 1872 at Birch Lake, died May 1886 at St. Laurent.
- Marie Therese, born April 24, 1877 at Cypress Hills. She married Hyacinthe Laplante, the son of Toussaint Laplante and Elise Gervais in 1901. She died in 1902 at Batoche.
- Marie Jane, born September 28, 1880 and died in May 1881 at St. Laurent.
- Eustache Jean Chrysostome, born September 21, 1881 at St. Laurent and died in 1882 at St. Laurent.
- Jean Chrystostome, born February 1883, died April 1883.
- Joseph, born January 30, 1884 at Fort à la Corne.
- Elie, born May 16, 1886. He married Mary Garriepy, children: Moise.
- Pierre, born October 16, 1888 and died May 22, 1889.

Family Scrip applications:

Scrip affidavit for Dumont, Elie; born: October 15, 1847; father: Isidore Dumont (Métis); mother: Louise Laframboise (Métis); claim no.: 2548; date of issue: April 17, 1877. Dumont, Elie; heir to his deceased son, Esdras Dumont; claim no. 325; born: August, 1871 at Fish Creek; died: 1873 at Fish Creek; father: Elie Dumont (Métis and deponent); mother: Françoise Ouellette (Métis); address: Bellevue, Saskatchewan; scrip cert.: form F, no. 175 for 240 acres of land.

Scrip affidavit for Dumont, Françoise; wife of Elie Dumont; born: March 30, 1847; father: Joseph Ouellette (Métis); mother: Therese Houle (Métis); claim no.: 2549; date of issue: April 17, 1877

Dumont, Elie; heir to his deceased son, Eustache Jean Chrystome Dumont; claim no. 326; Chrysostome Dumont; born: 21 September, 1881 at St. Laurent, Saskatchewan; died: 1882 at St. Laurent, Saskatchewan; address: Bellevue, Saskatchewan; father: Elie Dumont (Métis and deponent); mother: Françoise Ouellette (Métis); scrip cert.: form F, no. 181 for 240 acres of land.

Dumont, Elie; heir to his deceased son, Jean Chrysostom Dumont; claim no. 229; born: February, 1883 at St. Laurent; died: 16 April, 1883 at St. Laurent; address: Bellevue, Saskatchewan; father: Elie Dumont (Métis and deponent); mother: Françoise Ouellette (Métis); scrip cert.: form D, no. 469 for \$240.00.

Dumont, Elie; heir to his deceased daughter, Mary Jane Dumont; claim no. 323; born: 19 September, 1880 at St. Laurent; died: May, 1881 at St. Laurent, Saskatchewan; address: Bellevue, Saskatchewan; father: Elie Dumont (Métis and deponent); mother: Françoise Ouellette (Métis); scrip cert.: form F, no. 179 for 240 acres of land.

Dumont, Elie; heir to his deceased son, Alfred Dumont; claim no. 324; born: 27 November, 1872 at Birch Lake; died: May, 1886 at St. Laurent; address: Bellevue, Saskatchewan; father: Elie Dumont (Métis and deponent); mother: Françoise Ouellette (Métis); scrip cert.: form F, no. 177 for 240 acres of land.

Dumont, Marie Thérèse; address: Bellevue, Saskatchewan; claim no. 480; born: 24 April, 1877 at Cypress Hills; father: Elie Dumont (Métis); mother: Françoise Ouellette (Métis); scrip cert.: form C, no. 693 for \$240.00.

Dumont, Joseph; address: Bellevue, Saskatchewan; claim no. 481; born: 30 January, 1884 at Fort a la Corne; father: Elie Dumont (Métis); mother: Françoise Ouellette (Métis); scrip cert.: form E, no. 321 for 240 acres of land.

Elie travelled from Fort à la Corne to join his brother at Batoche during the Resistance of 1885. He was a Captain of one of the 19 companies led by Gabriel Dumont during the Resistance.

Elie Dumont's account of the battle of Tourond's Coulée:

After returning from McIntosh's farm the Metis stop at a coulee two miles south of Tourond's Coulee. It is from there that Gabriel, on a reddish-white horse, and Napoleon Nault, on a golden-haired horse leave. They go up to the camp; the police nevertheless do not seem to want to chase them. They continue on to the big coulee and arrive there before sunrise.

They kill a three-year old ox at Tourond's. Using willow branches they barbecue the meat over an open fire. Meanwhile, Pierre Laverdure and Gilbert Breland had remained in the little coulee to watch for the arrival of the enemy.

The Metis were eating in groups of five or six. Just as they were finishing, Pierre Laverdure arrives. He has not seen anything so far. He is hungry and sits down to eat with Elie Dumont. He is not through eating when Gilbert Breland arrives to announce that the police are near.

They get ready. They remove their coats and tie them to their saddles. Breland had said that there were two scouts ahead, one coming up the coulee from the river, the other following the road. Ten of them leave on horseback; among them are Gabriel and Elie Dumont, Baptiste Deschamps, the twenty-one-year old Sioux who was shot while dancing; Isidore Trottier, Edouard Dumont (raised by old Jean Dumont, Gabriel's uncle); and John Swain.

Taking cover under the trees, they advance till they are at a distance of about 300 yards from their people. They see the scout coming up the coulee. He is now so close that he will discover them. They will chase him; and away they go. The scout

has on a fur coat; he flees. Not being able to overtake him they all fire. They can see a gunshot in the fur coat. The scout does not fall right away; but he falls when he reaches his people who are about 400 yards from the ten Metis. They saw the horse turn to the right and the man fall to the left.

They look in the direction of their people. Already the enemy is closing in. "We could see the criss-crossing of the fumes," said Eli Dumont; "our men were shouting with joy and throwing their coats and blankets in the air. I thought this to be beautiful."

Ten other Metis join Gabriel's group. The police advance; they fire from two sides. It is then that a Sioux, who is young and of small stature, climbs to the top of the hill and begins to dance. He fires a shot and climbs down. Two minutes later he climbs up again, fires another shot, and as he is coming down, is hit in the back. He falls and rolls down, blood flows from his mouth.

Elie and the others then descend into the cove. Elie ties his horse there. The others tie their horses round the corner of the bluff. At that moment the Metis are already cut off. When the police, coming around the bluff met the Metis who were positioned at a point southeast of the bluff, the latter fled into the coulee. That is where Gabriel went after them. They heard him fighting there until noon. Only the 45 others remained surrounded in the bluff. Shortly before noon, Petit Corbeau's son is killed.

"I didn't think that I would last fifteen minutes," said Elie Dumont. "Little branches, broken by bullets, were falling on our heads."

During part of the day, Elie Dumont, Napoleon Nault, Joseph Delorme, Pierre Laverdure, etc... a total of fifteen, were held up and it was during this time that the English brought up a canon, about thirty feet away from the Metis.

When approaching the English would sound the trumpet. The Metis remained there all day without losing anybody else. It was snowing lightly. Many of them were in shirts or short-sleeved vests.

Elie Dumont goes to see Pierre Parenteau who is dead. He takes him by the head and then calls Anderson over; the latter helps him remove Parenteau's coat. Elie puts it on. The collar was full of blood. Parenteau had been shot blow the eye. In the pocket Elie Dumont finds a pipe, a chunk of tobacco, and some matches. He starts smoking the pipe.

The sunlight fading away, they make some plans to escape. They want to get everyone together, load their guns, and escape by following the coulee up north come nightfall. Should the enemy follow them, they would turn around, fire and continue their flight. It is thought that such a plan will deter the enemy from coming too close.

They were surrounded on all sides except for the one facing Tourond's house for the enemy could not go that way without coming in full sight. Before sunset, Elie hears a discharge; he knows that the shot did not come from a carbine but from a shotgun. He says to Damase Carrière: "It must be our people who have come to help us."

They soon see them coming. They arrive at a gallop. The police are already fleeing by companies. In the coulee and at a short distance from the bluff, Edouard finds, in addition to a white mare belonging to the police, a beautiful saddle, a saber,

and some bags containing soap, a towel, a razor, and rolls of white cotton. He keeps the saber only and gives the mare to Elie who returns to Batoche on it.

“I had lost my horse, but now I have a better one,” he said. “This animal is full of spirit, healthy, and seems to have been well fed with oats.” They look for guns abandoned by the police along the coulee; they collect 32 rifles.¹

In his 1885 Journal, Father Cloutier made the following notes from his interview with Elie Dumont regarding the fighting at Tourond’s Coulee. This narrative adds more detail to the one given above:

In the afternoon, some Metis went down to the coulee point and met up with Gilbert Breland, Pierre Henry, Isidore Dumont, and Louison Letendré. Elie Dumont stayed for one half hour and then walked back up the hill and into a sort of a natural ditch, 20 inches deep and 24 inches wide. He saw a man almost frozen, (Charles Thomas) saying: ‘All morning long, he was in a coulee in a foot of water on ice and he just finished getting out of there.’ Coming up to him, I touched him and called, “My brother, I realize that you are almost frozen.” He looked and did not answer. There are people lying down in this ditch, it was who would be able to squeeze down the most. (Like pigs in a ditch, the strongest are at the bottom.)

He (Elie Dumont) looked at the incline and saw James Short, alone, he was defending himself. Elie climbs again, sees Max Lepine, holding a cross, the same one that was at Duck Lake.

At Fish Creek, Maxime Lepine was carrying Christ crucified, that had been detached in the action, from the cross carried by Riel at Duck Lake. Lepine had a gun but did not fire (because his gun was broken).

He (Elie Dumont) sets himself up there, looks to the side, and sees Michel Desjarlais, sitting: after 3 or 4 minutes, Michel Desjarlais is hit, he is dead the next night. He looks and sees Anderson (Tom Anderson’s son) who wants to go to our 1st place (crawls forward) to 20 yards from Elie, Pierre Henry sitting by Elie, aims and fires on an associate. Anderson does not do him any harm. Elie states after the fact that Anderson is not hurt but throws himself down on his stomach. One half hour later, Elie gets to where Anderson wanted to go, where Pierre Parenteau was killed. I wanted to take his coat (capot) because of the cold and the rain. He, Elie Dumont tries to take it off, but is not capable; he asks for help from Anderson, takes off the outfit and wears it full of blood.

(The) mannequins were not created on purpose, the Métis, having put their coats on the branches; they are full of bullet holes.

Covered with the coat (capot), he is warmly dressed. The black Parenteau joins us. The Metis soldiers say they don’t want to be captured. They would rather die than be captured. One quarter of an hour later, the limping Savage, the one who was walking with a crutch when leaving Batoche, sings his death song. After his chant, he says: Courage; when we were born, they told us we were men. Courage if we are going to die, we will die today. He advises his brother, (Teal Duck) to sing with him.

The lame man stands up, and makes a few little jumps – the sun going down. All of a sudden we hear a gun shot from the other side of the coulee. We think it is a cap

¹ SHM, 30-35.

gun. Shortly after we see the soldiers retreat. Another rifle shot. Ah – our people! Almost sunset the cavalry appears. Shouts of joy. Our people charge at the coulee. A gray mare of the soldiers, is tied in the coulee. Edward Dumont climbs on her (she is saddled) and gives her to Elie Dumont when meeting him and Elie goes back to Batoche on horseback that same night.

Pierre Tourond confirms this advance – he was wounded near noon. (There was) fog, snow and light rain, mist and fog two or three times during the day. Haven't eaten all day. Breakfasted when the sun rose. Had supper after arriving at Batoche. Didn't drink much either, but I wasn't very thirsty.

45 at the most 46 people in the combat. After the combat, they ran on the battlefield to pick up guns, bullets, and found a medicine box and three bottles of brandy.

The cannon fired at the empty house of the Widow Tourond. They killed her pig.

At night Moïse Ouellette counted the men at the end of the coulee and counted 44. We remarked to him that he had forgotten one. In all we were 45. This is the most accredited among the population and the most spread out.²

Elie describes their attempt on the first day of fighting at Batoche to capture the Gatling gun:

Tout droit où (les soldats) mettaient le Gatling, on se trouvait dans les petits trembles - Philippe (était à) 2 pas en avant de moi et Boucher à mes côtés—

Tout d'un coup Philippe dit: V'la de la police dans le petit coteau - Alors, Philippe tire et Bap. Boucher tire aussi—Les gens du gatling ont commencé à tourner la machine quand la machine a craqué on s'est jeté sur le ventre—le gatling tire sur nous—Les petits trembles et les branches (furent) frappés à 2P2 pds à 3 pds au-dessus de la terre—au-dessus de nos têtes—et ne nous touchait pas—Quand fut fini la décharge, là je retourne sur le même chemin en courant et mes associés sont allés du bord de la rivière. Tout d'un coup en courant, j'entends craquer—Je me couche sur le ventre—Le coup part, et tire trop haut comme la 1ère fois—“Quand fut fini la décharge, Je me sauve en descendant les côtes—Une partie de nos gens étaient là et voulaient aller au bord de la Rivière (cela 200 vgs plus haut que chez Chalin) on était comme une 30ne. On a suivi la Rivière, à l'abri des écarts (i.e. écorres, rives escarpées) pour remonter le courant jusque vis-à-vis du gatling; il reste ne heure là à tirer—Il voulait ramasser du monde assez pour aller prendre la gatling sur la côte en face de nous - 5 ou 6 voulaient venir avec moi—Dans le ravin il y avait environ 100 personnes—(sauvages Sioux, Cris et Métis) J'incitais pour aller et faisais un plan—(il veut) aller proche dans les trembles, il avance d' environ 250 vgs—7 ou 8 ensemble—3 Métis et des Cris—il restait encore 100 vgs, pour aller au gatling—Je vais regarder—On ne voulait plus prendre le gatling: on n'était pas assez de monde. De temps en temps on tirait de là—

² Cloutier, 1885:

Tout d'un coup, nos gens laissés au bas, (nous) ont tiré sur nous, ils étaient une 15 ne, ils nous ont rasé—On a resté 2 hr. là et (on) retourne par le même chemin en courant vite au bord de la rivière, pour éviter à nos gens de tirer sur nous—rendu à la Rivière on a remonté sur le sens des côtes vers le cimetièrè—on était une trentaine—On a été auprès du cimetièrè une 30 ne—Les soldats (étaient) déjà reculés-On ne pouvait pas tirer; les soldats étaient trop loin déjà.³

Elie died in 1925 and his wife Françoise died in 1929, both are buried in the Batoche Cemetery.



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³ Cloutier, Vol. 2, p. 40 (Payment transcript).