

Heroines of the 1885 Resistance: Virginie Fisher Tourond. (b. 1859).

Spouse, David Tourond (1851-1890).

Virginie was born at Qu'Appelle, the daughter of George Fisher and Emelie Boyer. She married David Tourond, the oldest son of Joseph Tourond Sr. and Joseph Paul at St. Francois Xavier in 1875. They settled near Tourond's Coulee in 1883. David was a member of Riel's Council (Exovedate) at Batoche during the 1885 Resistance. He was not tried for his Resistance activities having escaped to Montana. They then took up residence at Turtle Mountain, North Dakota. The family later returned to Batoche and David died there on September 11, 1890. Virginie subsequently married Napoleon Hamelin at Lebret in 1890.

Between the battle for Fish Creek and the final battle for Batoche, Virginie gave birth to a child, Urbain, on the night of April 30 or the morning of May 1, 1885 in a tent situated on a slope near Batoche's Crossing. She was along with her mother-in-law. So frightened were they that they did not dare have some light which could have attracted the enemy's attention. However, they finally decided that some lighting was necessary. Such were the tragic circumstances surrounding the child's birth.

During the battle, or rather, several days later, the women would change places constantly so as to avoid the fire of the enemy. They would hide behind trees or in damp holes.

After the battle, while walking around the booty collected by the enemy, Mrs. Tourond recognized one of her suitcases which contained the very clothes she needed. She tried to grab it. Some soldiers brutally shoved her back. But since she spoke English very well, she argued with them and answered them sharply. An officer arrives who asks what is going on. She explained to him that she had just had a baby; that she does not have any clothes to change into; and that this suitcase which belongs to her contains what she needs. The officer immediately gives it to her and apparently, he severely punished the soldiers who had been rude to her.

David Tourond had not surrendered right away. He wanted to turn himself in at Prince Albert. He met Father Andre who was returning from Prince Albert and who told him: "Don't turn yourself in; go to the other side of the border."¹



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¹ SHM, pp. 82-83.