

Patrice Breland, M.L.A. (1837-1908)

Patrice served as a Justice of the Peace in the North West Territories, as a member of the Manitoba Legislature from 1880 to 1882, and as Reeve of the RM of St. Francois Xavier from 1891 to 1892, and from 1895 to 1900.



James McKay (l) and Patrice Breland
PAM, H. Letourneau Collection. # 17, Negative 14318.

Patrice was born at St. Francois Xavier on March 17, 1837, the son of Pascal Breland and Maria Grant. He was married to Helen Dease, the daughter of John Dease. In 1879 Patrice was elected to the Manitoba legislature by acclamation for the riding of St. François-Xavier. He was a fur trader, traveling between Manitoba and the Cypress Hills, as well as other points in the North West Territories. He usually worked as a trader with his father and was a Riel supporter in 1869-70. In 1878, Patrice and other Metis buffalo hunters at Cypress Hills wrote a petition asking for a special Metis reserve of land.¹

¹ Requesting a re-opening of the buffalo hunt between November 14th and February 15th each year and the granting of Metis “reserve” land (A strip of land 150 miles long along the American border beginning where the Pembina River crosses the border. This strip was to be fifty miles from south to north.

This was one of the Metis families arrested at Fort Belknap for hunting in Montana. November 24, 1878:

November 24: Cypress Mountains, Patrice Breland writes: The news here, although not very good, because the Buffalos (bison) are very scarce in the neighbourhood, they are plentiful on the other side of the line along the Milk River, but there is great inconvenience to go and hunt in that direction because the Americans defend it, they have made prisoners. Antoine Brillant the elder, Peter Lapierre, Alexander Brillant, Pierre Labruler, Ambroise Chartrant, Charles Demontigny and Joseph Azure, they have all been made prisoners with their families. They were arrested at Fort Belknap, they have been released after 7 or 8 days after, without being fined provided they don't return and tell folks that other prisoners will be put in gaol for two years and their horses and carts taken. I have learned that the Teton (Sioux) go hunting on the other side of the line numbering 300 men. The Teton are not numerous here. They are about 50 lodges and the Sante about 30 lodges, and the remainder of the Teton with Sitting Bull are at the Mud house on White River (Utah), I have learned that they are about 1,000 lodges. I think I will go very soon to trade with these people...



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