

## **William McMillan (1806-1903)**

William McMillan was born in 1806 at Fort Edmonton, the son of James McMillan (1783-1858) and Josephthe Belisle (b. 1786)<sup>1</sup>. James McMillan was a NWC and HBC fur trader, first Chief Trader then Chief Factor at Fort Langley. McMillan went on to become a Chief Factor at the HBC's Red River Settlement, and he was brought in to manage a failed experimental farm at St. James. McMillan and Belisle had a second son, James, born in 1808. They then separated. Josephthe then married Louis Amable Fafard dit Delorme by custom in 1815 and formally in 1832 (they had a further five children).<sup>2</sup> McMillan subsequently married Marie Letendre, Marguerite Kilakotah Clatsoppe and Ellen McKinley (from Scotland). He had a further seven children with these women.

William married Marguerite "Margaret" Dease (1818-1912), the daughter of John Warren Dease (also an HBC Chief Trader) and Genevieve Beignet in 1838. They had nine children:

- Marguerite, b. 1840, married Jean Baptiste Beauchemin,
- Marie Anne, b. 1842, married Salomon Carriere,
- Philomene, b. 1847, married Thomas Hogue,
- Virginie, b. 1851, married Daniel "Baton" Carriere,
- Joseph, b. 1849, married Appoline Bruce,
- Sarah, b. 1854, married Joseph Turcotte then Pierre Jobin,
- Patrice, b. 1856, married Beatrice Caplette,
- John, b. 1858, married Sarah Virginie Bruce, and
- Elizabeth, b. 1859, married Pierre Bruce the brother of Sarah Bruce.

He was a buffalo hunter at Fort Edmonton, he also worked as a middleman and steersman on the HBC York boats until retirement in 1835. They then settled at Red River in the late 1830s. In the Red River Census of 1859 William is shown as having 10 acres of cultivated land, a store with merchandise, two houses, two stables, seven carts and a variety of farm animals and horses and oxen. He had apparently imported fast horses from Kentucky for buffalo running. William signed the Metis Petition for Special Rights in August 29, 1845 and the 1849 and 1850 letters to HBC Governor George Simpson requesting to put a Metis representative on the Red River Council. He died at Winnipeg in 1903.



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<sup>1</sup> Josephthe was the daughter of Antoine Belisle (b. 1760) and Josephthe Belly (b. 1772).

<sup>2</sup> Their son Pierre later became an M.P.

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