

Gareau, Napoleon

Napoleon was a French Canadian, the son of Antoine Gareau and Marie Louis Robichaud. He was born at St. Jacques de l'Achigan, Quebec and moved to Batoche to join his brother Ludger in the summer of 1883. His name appears of Philippe Garnot's list to Taché as a resistance supporter. His brother-in-law was Philippe Charles Chamberland, another Resistance participant. In a family biography Laurier Gareau writes:

During the winter of 1883-1884, life was harsh at Batoche. Ottawa was still refusing to grant the Métis titles to their River Lots. One can easily understand why the Métis were so angry with the government. All through the winter, secret meetings were held around Batoche, Duck Lake and Prince Albert. It is possible that Ludger and Napoleon took part in some of these meetings. After the resistance of 1885, the name of Napoleon appeared on a list of Riel supporters.¹

Ludger was the local master carpenter and had bought land at Batoche from the Oblates. Ludger built the St. Antoine de Padoue Rectory in 1883 and the St. Antoine Church at Batoche in 1884—both of which were of Red River style construction. Napoleon Gareau(It) was Ludger's younger brother who on February 4th, 1890 at St. Laurent married Angélique Nolin,² a Métisse.

During the winter of 1884-1885 Ludger took his new bride on a honeymoon to Lower Canada (Quebec) to meet his parents, leaving his brother Napoleon in Batoche to look after his place. While away, the Resistance came to a head and although Ludger was away from his property at this time and even with the pleading of Father Julien Moulin O.M.I., General Frederick Dobson Middleton torched his house and property claiming it hampered the Army's visibility of the town of Batoche.

Angélique Gareault dite Gareau (née Nolin) died at age 22 on September 4, 1894 during child birth (Batoche Register). Napoleon and Angélique had four children; however, only their third child lived beyond one week. All four children were baptized at Batoche—but the last child went unnamed as mother and child both died on September 4, 1894.

Written with contributions by Christine (Gareau) Aldridge the great-granddaughter of Ludger and Madeleine Gareau.



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¹ Laurier Gareau, www.societehisto.com/Genea/Geanea7.html

² Angélique was baptized on February 9, 1872 at Ste. Anne, the daughter of John Nolin (b. 1831) and Julie Martin dite Lavallee.

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