

Guardipee, Isabel (1869-1968)

Isabel was the daughter of Angélique Morissette, born 1852¹ and Alexandre Gariepy (b. 1842).² Her parents were married in Edmonton circa 1867. They went to Montana where Alexandre deserted Angélique. They had three children: Edward born 1867; Isabel born 1869; and George born 1872. Alex then had three children with Louise Run Rough and a further three children with Marie Gaddy.

Angélique then married Abiel LaCourse. In the 1880 census at Sun River Valley, Fort Shaw, Montana they are recorded as LaCourse Angeline / Indian / female / age 28 / married / occupation Keeps House / maimed, crippled, bedridden or otherwise disabled / cannot read / cannot write / born Canada / father born Canada / mother born Canada / living at Sun River Valley and Fort Shaw, Lewis and Clarke Country, with husband Abiel LaCourse, daughter Isabell LaCourse, son [or stepson] George LaCourse, daughter Madeline LaCourse, daughter Mariah LaCourse. Angélique must have died shortly after this census.

Isabel was christened on April 1, 1870 at Teton River, by Father C. Imoda S.J. [record from the Holy Family Mission in Browning]. An extract from the Blackfeet Reservation Tribal rolls for Eli Guardipee, the son of Jean-Baptiste Guardipee and Judith Cardinal, refers to Angélique, the half-sister, same mother, once the wife of Abe LaCourse who died, leaving Isabel and Eddie LaCourse.

George Tozer³ and Isabel met when George was a member of the NWMP and in Calgary. Isabel had moved with her family to Calgary in 1884. In the 1891 Calgary Census, they are recorded as Isabella Tozer / female / age 21 / married / Wife / birthplace U.S. / father's birthplace U.S. / mother's birthplace U.S. / religion Roman Catholic / can read / can write / living at W 1/2, District 22 A, Calgary, with husband George Henry Tozer, daughters Alice and Susan Tozer.

In the 1901 Census at Macleod, Alberta she is shown as Bishop Lizzie / female / white / Wife / married / born June 1871 / age 30 / born Canada Rural / racial origin French / nationality Canadian / religion Catholic / can read / can write / speaks English / speaks French / mother tongue French / living at Lethbridge, with husband Joseph Bishop⁴, daughters Alice and Nellie Bishop, son Joseph Bishop, 3 boarders.

In the 1920 Census at Browning Montana Isabel is listed as Bella Marion / Mother-in-law / female / Indian / age 47 / widow / not at school in 1919-1920 / does not read / does not write / born Montana, mother tongue English / father born Canada, mother tongue French / mother born Canada, mother tongue English / speaks English / occupation None / living in School District 9, Browning, with son-in-law Solomon Paul, daughter Susie T Paul, granddaughters Ruby, Edna and Mildred Paul, grandson Stanley Paul.

In the 1930 Browning, Montana Census she is recorded as Isabel Bishop / Lodger /

¹ Angélique Morissette was born at Edmonton. While en route to Montreal her father died at Sault Ste. Marie and Angélique returned to Edmonton with her mother.

² Alex was the son of Louis Gariepy and Joseph Ducharme. Alexandre was the younger brother of Jean Baptiste Gariepy (b. 1832). Alexandre was first married to Genevieve Cadotte. They had three children; Bonaventure born 1865; Napoleon born 1867; and Marie born 1872.

³ George Henry Tozer Sr., born. July 1861, London, Middlesex, England, died January 30, 1898, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

⁴ Joseph Bishop, a coal miner born May, 11 1864, Canada.

renter / no radio set / lives on farm / female / Indian / age 58 / widow / age 14 at first marriage / not at school in 1929-30 / does not read and write / born Montana / father Mixed / mother Cree / speaks English / occupation Labor / at work yesterday / not a Veteran / living in School District 9, Browning, in household of [granddaughter's husband] Arthur J Walters, [granddaughter] Nellie M. Walters, lodger Frank Boyle.

In December 1941, she was living in Cut Bank Montana as Mrs. Isabelle Marion (according to Alice Theresa Tozer obituary). Name given as Elizabeth Tozer on marriage registration for daughter Alice Theresa Tozer in 1904; name given as Elizabeth Gardipee on death certificate for daughter Alice Theresa Tozer in 1941. Obituary names her parents as Mr. and Mrs. Joe Gaurdipee.

In the family records Lorraine Estelle Paul notes: "Gramma Isabel was Cree if she was Blackfeet she never mentioned it although she could speak the language but then she spoke 7 languages. She was really independent and very much her own person."⁵

"Isabel Gardipee was raised by her uncle Eli Guardipee, together with her brother Frank, after her parents' death. Since Gramma Isabel was born in 1869 and I believe was in North Dakota for some time where her parents were killed, then Uncle Eli took her to Canada and on to Montana in the late 1800's. The tribes wandered around so much that it is hard to say where exactly they were and when. Gran told me that she lived for a time with the Nez Perce and with the Assinaboine as well, she could speak both dialects fluently. I used to think perhaps she was captured by an enemy tribe but that wasn't so Uncle Eli just lived in a lot of different places and so she did as well. She had "people" around Calgary because Grampa bought her a buggy and horse and she used to take off with one or two of the children and be gone for a few days while she visited "her people". I never ask who they were and now I really wished I had. But she never talked much about her family and if Uncle Eli hadn't come to visit us so often I wouldn't have known about him I guess. The fact that he was also my sister in laws grandfather I guess is why I know more about him and he is written about in several books."⁶

According to Lorraine Estelle Paul, Isabel lived with Billy Marion (b.c.1879, died before 1920) for about 10 years and went by the name Isabel Marion at her death and for years before that. After Joe died she lived with Billy Marion. Billy Marion was 10 years younger than Gran so she refused to marry him and in those days that was something.⁷



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⁵ <http://www.halhed.com/t4r/getperson.php?personID=1180&tree=tree1>. (Website Discontinued)

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Op. cit.*