

**Laurent Cadotte (1786-1874):
La Loche Boat Brigade Leader**

Laurent Cadotte was the son of Laurent Cadotte Sr. (b. 1766) and Suzanne (Cree). He married Betsy William (b. 1822) and they had ten children:

- Alexis
- Pierre, born 1830, married Julie Blondin.
- Jean Baptiste, born 1831, married Elise Pilon.
- Joseph, born 1832, married Christine Caron.
- Augustin, born 1837, married Angelique Laferte.
- Marie, born 1844, married Antoine Laliberte.
- Julie, born 1845, married Louis Vermette.
- Felix, born 1849, married Sarah Sutherland.
- Elise, born 1850, died 1864.
- Louise, born 1854, married David Larence.

Laurent started working for the North West Company in 1811 as a steersman at Ile a la Crosse 1811 to 1819. He was then employed with the Hudson's Bay Company after amalgamation of the companies on the Columbia River 1822-1826, he then returned to the La Loche Boat Brigade. He led this brigade from 1826 to 1833. This involved traveling from Red River in York boats across Lake Winnipeg to Norway House, then along the Saskatchewan River, then the Churchill River, then to Lac La Loche, then to Methy Portage, where this crew met those coming down from the Mackenzie River district and furs were exchanged for provisions. The route covered 4,000 miles on a tight schedule using dangerous waterways. Laurent is shown as a Freeman at Red River from 1833 to 1835, then working as a guide until he retired in 1839.¹ After 1833 Alexis "Bonami" Lesperance became brigade leader.

¹ Men from the Red River Settlement recruited by the Hudson's Bay Company formed the first Portage La Loche brigade of 1828. The brigade consisted of 7 York boats with Laurent Cadotte as guide. The guide in 1833 was Alexis L'Esperance (he retired in 1866). In 1848 two Portage La Loche Brigades were formed. Each brigade had seven boats, each with a guide. One brigade was still guided by Alexis L'Esperance, the other by Jean Baptiste Bruce. In 1866 the HBC increased the Portage La Loche Brigades to three with seventeen boats in total. The last Portage La Loche Brigade arrived at Norway House in the early 1870's.

Many of the men of the Portage La Loche Brigades of 1862 took part in the Red River Resistance of 1869. Michel Dumas, Baptiste Boucher, Jean Baptiste Bruce (mentioned by Father Emile Petitot O.M.I.) and most of the men were French Metis from the Red River Settlement. Many of these men also had close family ties to residents of the North-West. A few years after the Red River Resistance of 1869 the Portage La Loche Brigade route was broken up into smaller shorter sections.

The trip from the Red River Settlement to Portage La Loche would begin around the 1st of June and end around the 8th of October. (From "History of La Loche" <http://sites.google.com/site/portagelaloche/grand-portage-la-loche/the-fur-trade>)

The family lived on River Lot 113 at St. Norbert. His son, Baptiste patented this lot in 1885.²

NAME: CADOTTE, Laurent PARISH: Cumberland House ENTERED SERVICE: ca. 1810 DATES: b. ca. 1786

Appointments & Service Outfit Year*	Position:	Post:	District:	HBCA Reference:
<i>*An Outfit year ran from 1 June to 31 May</i>				
1811-1819	[North West Company]	[Ile a la Crosse]	English River	F.4/32b, p. 177
1821-1822		"		B.239/g/1
1822-1826	Bowsman		Columbia	B.239/g/1, 4, 5
1826-1827	"	Norway House		B.239/g/6
1827-1831	"	Frèt Est ^{2d}		B.239/g/7-10
1831-1832	Bowsman & Guide	" "		B.239/g/11
1832-1833	Guide	" "		B.239/g/12
1833-1835	Freeman**	Red River Settlement		B.239/g/13, 14
1835-1836	Guide	General charges***		B.239/g/15
1836-1837	Guide & Steersman		Athabasca	B.239/g/16
1837-1839	Guide		"	B.239/g/17, 18
1839	Retired			B.239/g/19

**Freed from Company's employ.
 ***Not assigned to a particular post.



Filename: Cadotte, Laurent (b. ca. 1786) (fl. ca. 1810-1839)



Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell
 Coordinator of Metis Heritage and History Research
 Louis Riel Institute

² The scrip application was made on 19 November 1875 at St. Norbert, Provencher, Manitoba,: Filed by: Baptiste Cadotte; St. Norbert; Provencher; farmer; For: Laurent Cadotte, deponent's father; Died: 23 Oct 1874; St. Norbert; Mother: Elizabeth Cadotte, mother of deponent died also at said place on the 3 March 1874. Sole Heirs: seven children: Baptiste Cadotte, deponent; Pierre; Joseph; Felix; Julie; Marie; Eliza. Baptiste Cadotte (x); 19 Nov 1875. Extraction from the Register of St. Norbert: Death of Elisabeth Thomas wife of Laurent Cadotte, cultivateur; abt 72. Death of Laurent Cadotte husband of Elisabeth Thomas; abt 80. C-14926(ibid.).