

## **Lafournaise, Gabriel (c. 1816/20-1910)**

Sub-Leader British-Canadian Boundary Commission, 1872-73

In 1872, the formal survey of the border between Canada and the United States began. Commissioner Donald R. Cameron chose William Hallett as Chief Scout to recruit a group to protect the British contingent from Sioux Indians or anyone else who might try to molest them. Gabriel Lafournaise was employed as a sub-leader for the British-Canadian Boundary Commission. This group was called the “49<sup>th</sup> Rangers” or “Hallett’s Rangers.”



Gabriel was born c. 1816 at Red River, the son of Joseph Lafournaise *dit* Laboucan and Susanne Leclair. His mother was a Nakota Métisse so Gabriel would have spoken both the Assiniboine and Cree languages. His father was a voyageur for the NWC stationed at Fort des Prairies (Edmonton) until 1821. He then became a “freeman hunter for the HBC in the same area. They moved to Red River in 1831. At age seven Gabriel and his parents arrived at the mission of Red River and he was baptized by Mgr. Provencher. Three years later he became one of the first students at Collège de Saint-Boniface. He married Susanne Collin, the daughter of Jean Baptiste Collin and Elizabeth Henry circa 1848, they had nine children. His sister Susanne Lafournaise was married to Francois Gosselin, a leader of the 49<sup>th</sup> Rangers.

Children of Gabriel Lafournaise and Susanne Collin:

- Marguerite, born circa 1848. She married Elie Parenteau.
- Adele, born February 1851 at St. Boniface.
- William, born October 25, 1853 at Lac Qu'Appelle. He married Isabelle Davis.
- Cecile, born circa 1854. She married Alfred Nault.
- Napoleon, born September 17, 1858 at St. François Xavier. He married Elise Bruneau.
- Maxime, born January 30, 1860 at St. Norbert., he died on July 3, 1885 at Rivière aux Rose.
- Marie Sarah, born November 11, 1862. she married John Nelson Dease.
- Charles, born April 17, 1866 at St. Norbert. He died on May 11, 1895 at St. Pierre Jolys.
- Jean Baptiste, born November 14, 1868 at St. Norbert. He married Marie Philomène Normand.

Gabriel was a HBC employee and buffalo hunter. He took part in the battle “des la Rivière Outardes” (now Goose River). In 1869-70, he was approached by Louis Riel to become a member of the provisional government but turned this down. In 1872, they were living just south of St. Pierre Jolys on lot # 38. Ten years later they moved to Mosquito Creek just south of St. Malo. Their son William was also a member of the 49<sup>th</sup> Rangers.

Scrip affidavit for Lafournaise, Gabriel; born: 1820; father: Joseph Lafournaise (French Canadian); mother: Suzanne (Indian); claim no: 1847; scrip no: 10744; date of issue: September 20, 1876; amount: \$160.



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Appendix  
Scrip Documents

DOMINION OF CANADA.

PROVINCE OF MANITOBA.

County of *Provencher*

Parish of *St. Norbert*

I *Gabriel Lafournaise*  
of the Parish of *St. Agathe (Not-Plain)* in the County  
of *Provencher* in said Province, *farmer*

make oath and say as follows :

1. I am a Half-breed head of a family resident in the Parish of *St. Norbert* in the said Province, on the 15th day of July, A.D. 1870, and consisting of myself and *wife and children* and I claim to be entitled as such head of family to receive a grant of one hundred and sixty acres of land or to receive Scrip for one hundred and sixty dollars pursuant to the Statute in that behalf.
2. I was born on or about the *year* A.D. 1820 in the *Province of W. Territoria*.
3. *Joseph Lafournaise French Canadian* was my father; and *Suzanne, an Indian woman* was my mother.
4. I have not made or caused to be made any claim of land or Scrip other than the above in this or any other Parish in said Province, nor have I claimed or received, as an Indian, any annuity moneys, from the Government of said Dominion.

*Gabriel Lafournaise*  
his  
mark.

Sworn before me at the Parish and County aforesaid on the *10th* day of *December* — A.D. 1875 having been first read over and explained in the *French* language to said deponent who seemed perfectly to understand the same and *affixed his mark* in my presence.

*A. S. Johnson*  
Commissioner.

*Affdt. N° 2034*  
*Claim N° 1847*  
*Scrip N° 10744. # 160. (C).*  
*Scrip issued on 20<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1876.*  
*2-4-86. J.A.C.*