

Adelaide Caroline Branconnier Morrissette. (1832-1919)

By Amanda Rozyk.

Adelaide was born on September 6, 1832 in St. Boniface Manitoba, to Jean Baptiste Branconnier and Elise Louise Beauchemin (b. 1790). Elise's father, André Millet dit Beauchemin was born January 19, 1791 in Quebec, and her mother was an Indian woman.

Adelaide Branconnier Morrissette. Photo courtesy of Rosemary Morrissette Rozyk



Adelaide's father, Jean Baptiste, was a voyageur with the North West Company. He signed a contract with the company in 1804, and came to the forks of the Red River during that time. In 1815, he was captured and wounded at Fort Gibraltar by the Hudson Bay Company. He was placed on a ship, *The Prince of Wales*, and was sent to England to be prosecuted. However, during this voyage a second ship, containing all the evidence and prosecution documents, came into trouble and sank. As a result, Jean Baptiste was released and returned to North America.

Adelaide was raised in St. Boniface and later resided in St. Charles Assiniboia. Adelaide was very religious throughout her lifetime. It is recalled that she waited on the banks of the Red River in St. Boniface in order to greet the Grey Nuns upon their arrival.

Adelaide married Jean Baptiste Morrissette in 1851. It is recalled that she met Jean Baptiste when on her way to church in St. Boniface. Adelaide was travelling by horse and sled when her horse became frightened and bolted away. Jean Baptiste was walking ahead of her party and caught the horse, they were later married. Jean Baptiste was born in 1819, the son of Arsene Morrissette Sr. and Thérésé, an Aboriginal woman.

Adelaide and Jean Baptiste had eleven children and raised their family in Assiniboia in the road allowance community called Weak City.¹ Jean Baptiste worked for the Hudson Bay Company as a labourer on the barges. Adelaide acted as midwife for the St. Charles area. Father Caron recalled that Adelaide had delivered most of the babies in the area. Adelaide died October 31, 1919. (Contributed by Adelaide's great-great-great granddaughter, Amanda Rozyk.)



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¹ See the GDI Virtual museum entry under Weak City for further information.