

William “Tchee We Yam” Davis (b. 1845)

William Davis was born on June 24, 1845, the son of William Davis Sr. (b. 1823) and his first wife Marie Enno (Heneault). William was first married to Euphrosine Hamelin, the daughter of Jacques Bonhomme Hamelin and Mary Allary, then to Sarah Nolin, the daughter of Joseph Nolin and Louise Frederick. William and Euphrosine had four children; then William and Sarah had thirteen children. As a boy, William attended the 1859 meeting of the Metis and the Dakota Sioux at les Isles aux Mort when Jean Baptiste Wilkie negotiated a treaty outlining territorial boundaries between the two groups. Both William and his father were signers of Riel’s August 20, 1880 petition to Major General N.A. Miles requesting support and a reserve for the Montana Half-Breeds.

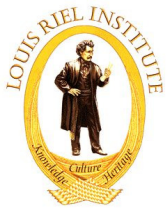
William’s father, William “Kug-kay-dway-wash-kung” Davis (b. 1823), is listed on the 1850 Pembina census as a hunter as family #116. William is shown as age 26, his wife Marie Vallee as age 20 and their son William as age six. William was born at Red River, the son of Jean Baptiste Davis and Betsy Josette, La Saulteuse. Josephpte was Josephpte Mijakammikijikok (Mezhekamakuikok) who was first married to fur trader Alexandre Wilkie. Thus William Davis and Jean Baptiste Wilkie were half-brothers. They moved to Pembina in the late 1840s. He married Marie Enno Heneault, then Marie Vallée at Pembina in 1862. William was also a counsellor for chiefs Little Shell II and III.¹ William was a signatory to Riel’s August 20, 1880 petition to Major General N.A. Miles requesting support for the Montana Half-Breeds. He and his brother Jean Baptiste Jr. were both members of the Turtle Mountain Band. He signed the 1878 Cypress Hills petition for a Metis Reserve. Their son Louis Davis (b. 1869) became one of the members of the Turtle Mountain Police in the early 1900s.

Laura Thompson Law’s book *History of Rolette County North Dakota and Yarns of the Pioneers*² gives the following family history:

William Davis, late of Belcourt was born on June 24, 1845, near Winnipeg, Manitoba, of French Indian parents. His father, William Davis, was born on June 28, 1823, near St. Boniface, Manitoba. His mother Marie Emmeau [sic], was also born near St. Boniface. William attended the school of Father Belcourt at St. Jo. With his family he moved about several times, having lived in Montana, Iowa, and Minnesota before finally settling down at Belcourt. Mr. Davis was married twice. There were four children by the first marriage. His second marriage was to Sarah Nolin, and to this union thirteen children were born, several of them still living in the Belcourt vicinity. Mr. Davis had many interesting stories to tell of his early days in hunting the buffalo.

¹ Counselors for Little Shell III in the 1890s [These men also served as counselors for Little Shell II: Ayse-sense]. Sas Swaine Poitras (67); Kug-kay-dway-wash-kung, William Davis (70), Paydway-walsh-kum, Louis Lenoir; Boin-ence Davis (73); Kar-yence Delorme (50), a son of Auguhk-quay; Sharlo Bottineau (68); Ossaotit, Francois Desmarais (55); Tchee-kee-tarn Parisien (68); Batees-shish Valley (58), son of Norbace Valley; Ahkee-win-nini, Alex Jannott (58); Tcheer-kuhk, Joseph Desmarais (56); Bayriss, Corbet Grant (55); Karn-nar-dah, Antoine Heneault (59); and Jean Batees Gorin (Champagne, 57).

² Rolla, N.D.: Rolla Centennial Committee, 1989 reprint of the 1953 book; pg. 166.



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