

Delorme, Madeleine (Gareau) (1867-1958)

Madeleine Delorme was the youngest daughter of Urbain Delorme and Marie Desmarais. On September 16, 1884 Madeleine Delorme married Ludger Gareau (Gareault) at Batoche. Upon arrival in Batoche in 1878, Ludger was awarded the contract to build the house of local Métis merchant Xavier “Batoche” Letendre. When it was completed, this house was the most beautiful home west of Red River. Besides building the church and rectory, Ludger also built a large two story house on a stone foundation for himself and his future bride. Ludger was the local master carpenter and had bought land at Batoche from the Oblates. Ludger built St. Antoine de Padoue Rectory in 1883 and the St. Antoine Church at Batoche in 1884—both of which were of Red River-style construction. Napoleon Gareau(lt) was Ludger’s younger brother who on February 4th, 1890 at St. Laurent married Angelique Nolin,¹ a Métisse.

During the winter of 1884-1885 Ludger took his new bride on a honeymoon to Lower Canada (Quebec) to meet his parents, leaving his brother Napoleon in Batoche to look after his place. While away on their honeymoon the Resistance came to a head and in fact Gabriel Dumont used Ludger’s house for Resistance meetings. Although Ludger was absent from his property at this time and even with the pleading of Father Julien Moulin O.M.I., General Frederick Dobson Middleton torched his house and property claiming it hampered the army’s visibility of the town of Batoche.



Ludger and Madeleine on their wedding day.

¹ Angelique was baptized on February 9, 1872 at Ste. Anne, the daughter of John Nolin (b. 1831) and Julie Martin dite Lavallee.

Ludger Gareau/Gareault² was the first one married in the new church. After building the needed coffins and doing repairs to his friend and neighbour Xavier ‘Batoche’ Letendre’s house; Ludger took his family to Pincher Creek Alberta to reside closer to Madeleine’s sister Marie Rose Smith who is the subject of the book “Fifty Dollar Bride” by Jock Carpenter.³

(Text and photograph contributed by Christine (Gareau) Aldridge the great-granddaughter of Ludger and Madeleine Gareau.)



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² Ludger was a French-Canadian, the son of Antoine Gareau and Marie Louis Robichaud. He was born at St. Jacques de l’Achuigan, Quebec.

³ Carpenter, Jock. *Fifty Dollar Bride, Marie Rose Smith – A Chronicle of Métis Life in the Nineteenth Century*. Sidney, British Columbia: Gray’s Publishing Ltd., 1977.

This is a biography of Marie Rose Smith, the author’s grandmother. (1861-1960). She was the daughter of Urbaine Delorme (1835-1871) and Marie Desmarais (1838-1924). It gives a depiction of Métis life from her birth at Fort Garry to ranch life near Lethbridge where she raised seventeen children. It includes much of Marie Rose’s written work in the narrative.