

April 3,, 2022

Blondeau-Collette/Dayton MN

Minnesota Territory Est. 1849

**Blondeau: Simon and Adelaide (LaCroix) Blondeau** and their seven children, teenage and younger, arrived in St. Anthony (later Minneapolis) sometime in the year 1854. This was the year of the Grand Excursion, which intensified interest in what would soon become Minnesota (1858).

Blondeau's last five children were born in the United States, the first baptized 12/21/1854 at St. Anthony Catholic Church (813 NE Main St, Minneapolis). Information is sketchy about them.

Simon Blondeau (b-1803) may have been a laborer in the construction of the Rideau Canal (1832). The couple married at St. Raphael West, Ontario, in 1836. They were 33 and 15 years of age.

In November, 1856, Simon Blondeau received a 120 acre land claim along the Mississippi river, two miles or so south of the village of Dayton. This became the family farm for many years. The 1998 address of that property was 15521 Dayton River Road, Dayton.

Likely, Simon came from a long line of Voyageurs and traders from the Montreal area. He was born in Pte. Claire, after the end of the Voyageur era. Up and down the Mississippi Valley from St. Louis north, the name "Blondeau" was known, including the first white woman to come to what became St. Louis, ca 1764. A Blondeau was one of the founders of the Beaver Club in Montreal (founded 1785).

The Blondeau family originated in Saumur, France, and is first noted in the area of Quebec City in 1655, thence in stages moving west to Montreal and into the interior of the west.

Simon Blondeau died May 14, 1882; his spouse Adelaide died in Minneapolis in 1898 at Little Sisters of the Poor, a short distance from St. Anthony's in Minneapolis. It is believed that both are buried in the St. Anthony Cemetery, but this is not known for certain.

Minnesota became a state 1858

Dakota Territory established 1861,

(What is now eastern North and South Dakota was unorganized 1858-61)

**Collette:** The Collet family name, from Brittany, first appeared in Quebec in about 1757, shortly before the English defeated the French. The locus of the family was south of Quebec City, a primary place St. Henri Bellechasse. The St. Anthony branch was that of **Denys Collet and Mathilde Vermette**.

In about 1864, nearly the entire family, Collet, including parents and nine of their 10 children from about 3 to 17, moved west from St. Lambert QC to St. Anthony. Their last child was born at St. Anthony. In about 1875 (more below) the family began its movement, first to Dayton area, then Dakota Territory.

The oldest Collet child, Sophronie, stayed in QC and married Etienne Lessard. Lessards came west to Dakota Territory about 1876. Lessard's had a large family. Little is known for certain where most of their children were born and where the children lived. There is data, but it is very unclear. But both parents lived for years, and likely are buried, at Oakwood. He died in 1924, she in 1926.

A half-brother, Samuel Collet, had earlier arrived in Minnesota, as a single man, at Centreville Minnesota Territory about 1857. Samuel and Philomena Gobin married and had a large family, basically in what became suburban St. Paul. But one child was baptized and apparently died young about 1883 in Pembina DT, suggesting they had actively explored the idea, at least for a time, of joining the rest of the

Collette's in ND. (The long-time pastor at Centerville (ca 1860-90), Fr. Goiffon, had been pastor at Pembina ca 1858-60.)

**Blondeau and Collette:** On July 12, 1868, Octave Collet and Clotilde Blondeau wed at St. Anthony, and lived with the rest of the Collet family a block or so from the present site of the Stone Arch Bridge across the Mississippi River from downtown Minneapolis at present day 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street SE.

**Manitoba became a province in 1870**

In about 1875, the entire Collet family moved to Dayton-Otsego area, possibly living with the Blondeau's or on other land, and beginning in 1878 the entire family moved to what was to become Oakwood ND, four miles east of not yet founded Grafton ND. During this time the family name, originally Collet, became the present name of Collette.

**Dayton:** Collette roots in Dayton became deep. Octave's brother, Philippe Collette, married Julie Boutin at Dayton April 30, 1877, before the move to DT, later North Dakota. Later their brother Alfred Collette returned to Dayton and married Celina Deschene at Dayton, April 21, 1887.

Julie died shortly after childbirth in DT in 1885 and is buried in Oakwood. Philippe then married Amelia Samson in Osseo in 1886, and they returned to Oakwood. At least one of their children was born at Anoka, near Osseo. About 1900 the family moved to Ste Elisabeth, Manitoba, a community east of Morris. Philippe died Dec 27, 1915, Amelia Dec. 4, 1951. Both are buried at Ste Elisabeth.

Alfred and Celina set roots on what may already have been Collette property purchased in 1874 in Otsego., adjacent to Dayton. This was where they lived most of the rest of their lives, raising a large family. (addr 1981, 8457 Mason Ave NE, Elk River). Two of Clotilde and Octave's young children, Adeline and Alex, are said to have died in Otsego in May, 1876, but also said to be buried at Oakwood, hundreds of miles away. (Oakwood Sacred Heart did not begin until 1881). The children were 4 and 2, their deaths probably from some disease, and while the story is unverified, the reported facts are plausible, even in context with nearly 150 years history.

**North Dakota became a state 1889**

Both Alfred and Celina are buried in the Dayton St. John's cemetery. She died Jan. 17, 1927; He died April, 1944.

The parents of the Collet family who came to St. Anthony in the 1860s, Mathilde (Vermette) Collette, and Denys Collette, died Jan 14, 1887 and Jan 29, 1893 respectively. Both are buried at Oakwood. They may have spent their few Dakota Territory years at or near Bathgate, about 40 miles north of Oakwood.

Clotilde Blondeau Collette died Sep 29, 1916 at Oakwood; Octave died Jan. 24, 1925, in Winnipeg. Both are buried at Oakwood. Octave remarried in Minneapolis Aug 28, 1917, at Ste Clotilde (now St Ann). Little is known of the second wife, Heminie Poisson Henault, a widow, who became ill and died after only a few years of their marriage, Sep 13, 1923.

#### **Information from:**

The First 400 Years. Four of the families of Henry Louis Bernard  
By Dick Bernard, Sep 21, 2010

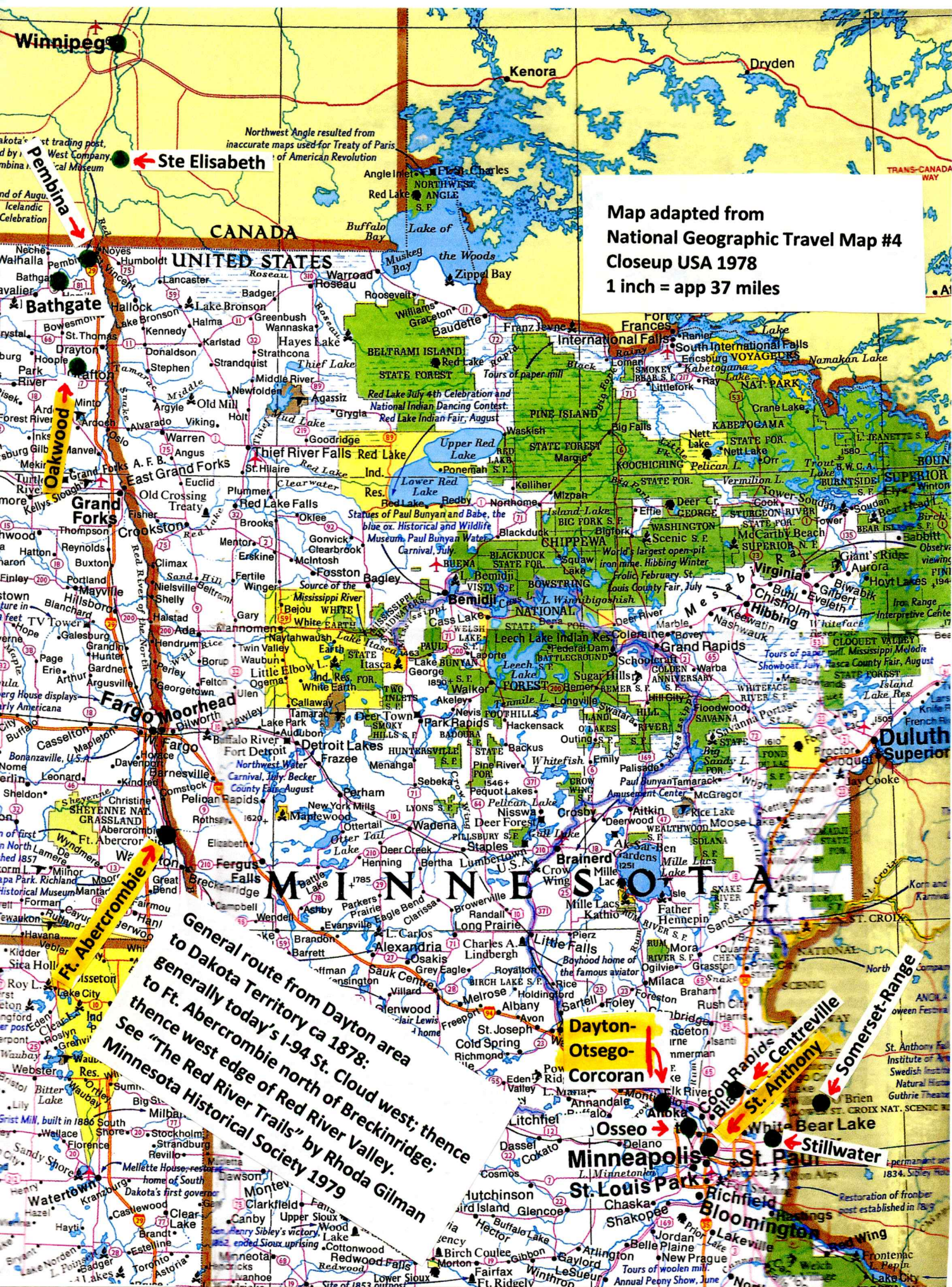
<https://chez-nous.net> Bernard-Collette

<https://outsidethewalls.org/blog/collets-of-st-anthony/> (April 7, 2012)

<http://fahfminn.org>

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Map adapted from  
National Geographic Travel Map #4  
Closeup USA 1978  
1 inch = app 37 miles

General route from Dayton area  
to Dakota Territory ca 1878;  
generally today's I-94 St. Cloud west;  
thence west edge of Red River Valley.  
See "The Red River Trails" by Rhoda Gilman  
Minnesota Historical Society 1979

Dayton-  
Otsego-  
Corcoran  
Osseo  
Minneapolis  
St. Paul  
St. Anthony  
Centerville  
Somerset-Range