

## Antoinne Le Count

Antoinne Le Count was considered the first settler in Plymouth Township, coming Oct. 1853, locating on the east shore of Medicine Lake. The records in " Abstract of Lands " in the Register of Deeds's office at Hennepin County shows that he purchased on Nov. 27, 1860, 97.82 acres in Section 24, Lot 3 and SE 1/4 of SE 1/4. He lived on it previous to purchase as required by law. Antoinne's life was adventurous and as colorful as any character in history. He was a traveler, explorer and a guide in the great Northwest Territory. His father was a noted guide and explorer, carrying mail from the Red River valley near the International Boundary down to St. Louis. He would carry mail, fancy trinkets and wampam made by the Indians and trade in whatever locality he delivered the mail for whatever he could get of value, preferably horses to take back to his home in the Red River valley. This practice brought him considerable wealth. Antoinne's father, called Le Gros, took into his family, Pierre Bottineau who later became famous as a guide, traveler and an agent for settling immigrants. Antoinne was born on the Minnesota side of the Red River, Nov. 6, 1822. In the summer of 1837 his father took him to Fort Snelling, remaining until September, when he returned to his home. Le Gros had made a claim on the east side of the Mississippi River near the falls including Nicollet Island. This claim was made in connection with Franklin Steele. In June of 1838 he decided to take his family to his new claim.

Antoinne's father took with him Bottineau and others including a Thomas Simpson who was in a great hurry to get to his destination. Simpson successfully persuaded Le Count to take a short cut at an agreeable price, thereupon Le Gros divided his party, one under Bottineau consisting of Mrs. Le Count and children with the exception of Antoinne., to take the long and less

hazardous trip through Lac Qui Parle and the group under Le Gros to take the short cut with Mr. Simpson, Antoine and two others. The fourth day out, Mr. Simpson became insane and shot Le Gros. Antoine's father urged his son to escape as he knew he was about to die. Simpson shot another man and at Antoine and Jim the hired hand. But they escaped and sought out the party manned by Bottineau. After about fifty miles of travel they found the party and Bottineau and Antoine returned to the scene of disaster, taking the bodies of Le Gros and the other murdered man, they returned to the Red River valley to bury them. Simpson had killed himself so his body was left by the roadside.

The party conducted by Bottineau continued the journey until they reached Fort Snelling, arriving about the middle of July. Antoine and his mother with the rest of the family stayed there until the following spring and then moved to Pig's Eye ( St. Paul ), where they remained one year. Then Antoine roved wherever his fancy dictated and finally settled in Plymouth Township where he lived until his death some time between 1895 and 1900. He built a one room log house of tamarack on what is now road 18. By 1895 he had built three newer and larger homes. He was married when he settled in Plymouth as a child of his was the first one to be buried in the St. Joseph's Cemetery. His wife Mary Begin, died at the age of 49 on Sept. 18, 1884. Two children, Frank age 3 months and 3 days, born June 18, 1873, died Sept. 24, 1873 and Jennie age 18 died Feb. 27, 1882. They were both buried at the same Cemetery.