

Territory of Minnesota }
District Court, 2d District, Hennepin County. } SS.

I, *Simon Blonds*, do

hereby, upon my oath, declare that I first arrived in the United States on or about the
19 day of *May*, in the year *1853*, and that I have ever since that

time continued to reside in the United States, and that it is bona fide my intention to become a
citizen of the United States, and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity which I in any
wise owe to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty, and particularly all allegiance
and fidelity which I owe to the *Victoria Queen of England*

..... of whom I have heretofore been a subject

Sworn to and subscribed before me, this }
73 day of *Oct* 185 } ss.

W. C. ... Clerk of said Court.

W. C. ...
by M. B. Cornell
Dep

Simon Blonds

the west end of Ile de Montreal or the neighboring St. Martin Ile de Jesus. But at this moment I have no hard evidence of this, other than a strong possibility.

The Family:

Blondeau's were, apparently, a physically very strong family.

The 1857 and 1860 U.S. census has Blondeau's living in the area of Dayton MN, upriver from Minneapolis. The 1860 census shows, along with father and mother, 11 children, 7 of whom were born somewhere in Canada. As previously noted (page 38), one is inclined to be suspicious of the stated ages in the census documents, but one might have a little more confidence when it is stated in the 1860 census that 10 year old Delina was born in Canada and 8 year old Victoria was born in the U.S., leading to the inference that the family arrived somewhere in the United States about 1851. As previously noted (preceding page), Simon declared he arrived in the United States in 1855. (In the 1860 census, Clotilde is called Clarissa, and her age given as 13...one has to be very open-minded in dealing with "facts" in family history!)

Since railroad transportation did not move west until after 1860, and not until after 1870 did it have fairly broad coverage of Minnesota, the Blondeau's, with 7 children ranging from 14 to 1, had to have endured endless difficult times just getting from one place to another. Today, the shortest auto route from Ottawa to Dayton MN (via Sault Ste Marie MI) is 1033 miles. Via the long time port of entry, Detroit MI, the trip is 1221 miles. One can only wonder their route, their means of travel, and how long it took them....

There is something that appears to be remarkable about this particular family, evidenced by the early censuses beginning in 1857, through 1895. The age range of the children, spaced at about two years, suggests that every child of the family may have survived the numerous hazards of being born in an age where infant (and maternal) mortality was very high.

From the assorted census documents gathered by John Garney, it appears that the Blondeau's finally may have had a total of 14 children, 7 girls and 7 boys. The branches of the Blondeau children, excepting ours and the branch of John Garney, are largely unknown to the writer at this juncture. The last two children listed on the MN census may not have been their children. This is not known at this point.

The census documents themselves reveal many things, not the least of which are the problems that census takers have, and later interpreters of census documents experience in future years. The documents reveal a reality: in this case, subjects of the census who can't write, speak only French and have only a casual interest in or knowledge of their actual birth date, or even falsifying a known birth date for some

reason; then encountering census takers who cannot spell or write too well in the first place, likely speak only English, or grew up speaking some other language as German, and are reduced to interpreting what they think their subject said when asked their name.

For a single example, earlier in this history (page 38) is recited the assorted ages that Simon and Adelaide gave to census takers in the assorted years. Here's the apparent (legibility of the written records is not always the best) recorded name of Adelaide (Mrs. Simon) Blondeau in the respective census documents during her time in the U.S.:

1857 - Ida

1860 - Adeline

1865 - Ida

1870 - Lydia

1875 - Ida (shown as being 56 years old)

1880 - Hattie (shown as being 33, wife, "Keeps House" I initially asked myself, "is this a new wife?" The next census appears to settle the question.)

1885 - Hattie (shown as being 65)

1895 - Hattie

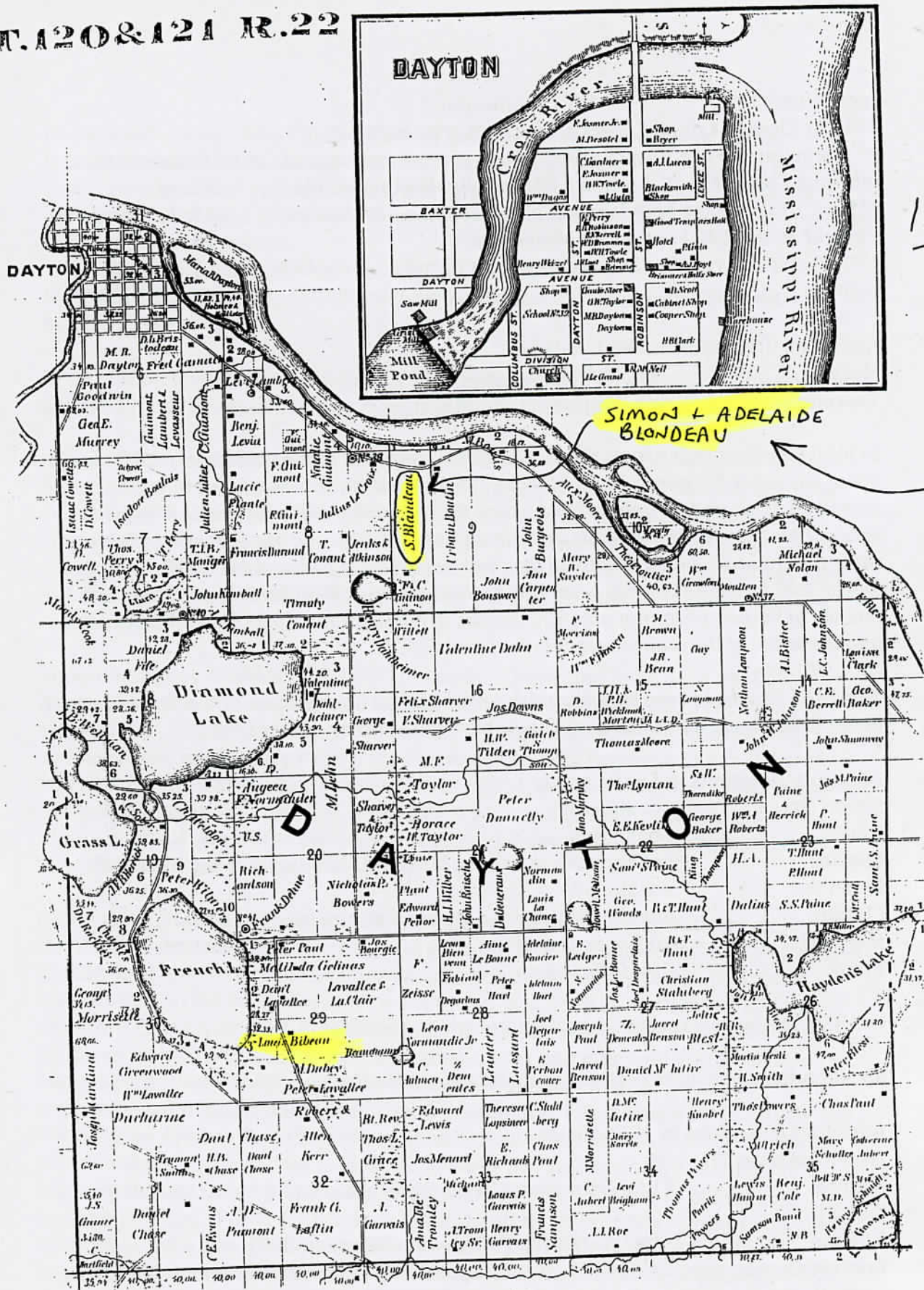
All of these people are likely the same person. When one ventures into the names of the kids, the problem is the same, and sometimes worse: is the named child one of theirs, or one "taken in" after someone died or couldn't take care of them. Or might they be youthful workers living with them? One is reduced to making logical inferences about the people reflected on one census against those same people reflected on another. Nonetheless, documents like the census records, as with the church records, can and do "sing" the family story of most families.

Here are some census records (all for the same location in Dayton MN - see plat map next page) of the family, as recorded by John Garney from census records in the 1990s. (John's grandmother was Josephine Blondeau, younger sister of Clotilde.) As noted, one needs to take some interpretative license with names, ages, etc. Few people would officially "exist" if rigid precision were required in interpreting handwritten documents before the time of transportable IDs!

1857 Census (Including Age/Sex/Where Born/Other Info)

Simon Blondeau	58/M/Canada/Naturalized Citizen
Ida (Adelaide) LaCroix	36/F/Canada/Naturalized Citizen
Simon	21/M/Canada
Alanamu (Oliver)	19/M/Canada
Charles	16/M/Canada
Philomine	12/F/Canada
Israel	10/M/Canada
Clarissa (Clotilde)*	8/F/Canada
Delina**	6/F/Canada
Victoria	3/F/Minnesota(?)***

1873



SIMON & ADELAIDE BLONDEAU

DAYTON

DAYTON

Diamond Lake

Grass Lake

French Lake

Hayden's Lake

Crown River

Mississippi River

BAXTER AVENUE

DAYTON AVENUE

COLUMBUS ST.

DAYTON ST.

ROBINSON ST.

DIVISION ST.

VALENTINE DAHN

Peter Dannelly

Norman

Joel

Theresa

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Josephine***** 1/F/Minnesota(?)

* - later Clotilde Collette, Henry Bernard's grandmother

** - John Garney in a July 25, 1999 letter, notes a marriage of Celina Blondeau to Jaorique Gagnier at St. Anthony, Minneapolis. Quite possibly this is Delina.

*** - in 1857 census both Victoria and Josephine are claimed to have been born in Canada; in the 1860 census, in Minnesota.

**** - Later marries Godfrey Garney, John Garney's grandfather (see 1875 note below).

Additions/Deletions in 1860 Census

Mary 2/F/Minnesota (addition)

Tearous 1/F/Minnesota (addition)

In John Garney's notes from the late 1990's is revealed some tantalizing census data about the early Blondeau farm: *"On the 1860 Agricultural Census, Simon had 35 improved acres and 85 unimproved acres; the cash value of his farm was \$700; the value of his farming implements and machinery was \$10; one horse, two mulch cows, three other cattle, 24 pigs, value of livestock was \$200. Produced 100 bushels of wheat, 200 bushels of Indian corn, 250 bushels of oats, 150 bushels of potatoes, 160 pounds of butter, 17 tons of hay, 400 pounds of maple sugar, 50 gallons of molasses, and the value of the animals slaughtered was \$65."*

The 1865 census is very sketchy, with only minimal information. Simon and Ida are listed first among 11 in the household. No ages or other data is listed.

Addition/Deletions in 1870 Census

Simon (Jr) not shown

Oliver not shown

Charles not shown - may have been in Lakeville Dakota Co MN

Israel not shown

Clotilde not shown (married Octave Collette in July, 1869)

Mary (?) 10 [Josephine ?]

Frank 8/M/Minnesota

In 1870, the census records a real estate value of \$3500.

Mr. Blondeau was quite certainly an industrious farmer.

Additions/Deletions in 1875 Census

Israel [returns ?] 28

George 11/M/Minnesota [from some other family ?, but see 1910, below]

Dileline 7/M/Minnesota [from some other family ?]

Godfrey Gonier, aged 24/Canada, is now apparently married to Josephine Blondeau, now 18, and they have a newborn daughter Mary. They apparently live near the Blondeaus, perhaps on the same farm (location 28, Blondeau's at 27).

In the 1880 census, Israel Frank, George and Tessay work at farm or home; Josephine and Godfrey Garney and their three children Mary, Samual and Jennie, 6, 3 and 9 months, also live at the home. Simon and "Hattie" presumably Adelaide, but here listed as only 33 years old - a pretty obvious mistake - are listed first, and he is listed as a retired farmer.

By 1885, Simon has died (1882), and the occupants are similar to 1880; ditto for 1895.

In the 1900 census, after both Simon and Adelaide have died, Francis, Philamine and George Blondeau remain on the farm, apparently none have married.

In the 1910 census, Philamine and George Blondo remain in the village of Dayton. According to John Garney's notes "looks like she owned house". Were Philamine and George brother and sister? ANECDOTE: in the time of my earliest research, circa 1982, I had a friend who lived in the town of Dayton. He noted a story from someone he knew who remembered a woman named Blondeau who smoked cigars. In John Garney's research, family members were cigar makers in Minneapolis in those times. Related?

Simon Blondeau died May 14, 1882, in Dayton. He would have been about 79. Adelaide died in Minneapolis at the Little Sisters of the Poor at 215 NE Broadway, on May 6, 1898. She would have been about 77, if born in 1821, as believed. For her, her last home would have been a true homecoming. At least one of her children, Mary Victorine, was baptized December 24, 1854, and her daughter Clotilde married Octave Collette in July, 1869 at, St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, two short blocks south of where she died. (See additional information in paragraph above "The Blondeau farm" below).

(For a virtual tour of the original St. Anthony, go to www.mapquest.com, enter 215 Northeast Broadway, Minneapolis, and go to aerial view, and zoom in. The star is at the former Little Sisters of the Poor facility, now apartments. Scroll two short blocks south to the corner of Main and 8th, and you'll see St. Anthony of Padua Church, 813 Main Street NE, Minneapolis, on the site of the 1850s and 60s church. Go down Main Street, St. Anthony's original, about one mile, and you'll see the famous St. Anthony Falls, central to the history of Minneapolis. Go slightly to the west, across the Mississippi River, to the present day intersection of Broadway and Washington Avenue N. At this place, at about the same time as Clotilde died, her grandchildren, my grandma Josephine, and her brother Arcidas, had their photo taken in a studio. That picture is the signature photo at the top of www.chez-nous.net/fc.html. While the photo is hand-dated as 1899, could it have been taken when they were down for Adelaide's funeral a mile or so away? A family handwritten document, reprinted in this history, which appears to precede 1900 shows Adelaide as dying in May, 1897...the discrepancies are normal.)

The Blondeau Farm:

Intriguing about the Blondeau family is the plot of land which they owned and farmed for many years, just a few miles downriver from present day Dayton MN. This was a farm fronting on the Mississippi River. Even at the beginning in the early 1850s it had significant value. According to John Garney in an October 6, 1998, letter, the address of the property today would be 15521 Dayton River Road, Dayton. It is bounded on one side by the Mississippi River; on another by Vicksburg Lane. It was a 120 acre parcel. Viewing it on Mapquest, it would appear to be the rectangular patch that is bordered by trees and has Vicksburg Lane N on the west side. If one scrolls on this aerial map about two miles or so northwest, the village of Dayton MN can be seen. The Church and cemetery, both very familiar to the Collette line, are on Division Street, just past Brockton.

Five miles or so in the other direction along the river is Champlain-Anoka. When I moved to the twin cities in 1965 son Tom and my first address was 1615 S. Ferry Street, Anoka, one block from the river at the Mississippi Bridge. At that time, and for many years later, I didn't realize two of my root families had settled, over 100 years earlier, just a few miles away, up the Mississippi River.

Simon declared for U.S. citizenship in 1857, declaring that he had entered the United States in May of 1855 (facing page 75). Of course, the previous recitation from the census concerning where the children were born indicates that they were probably somewhere in the United States some years before 1853. I guess this would have made them illegal aliens....

On January 18, 1995, Jean-Marc Charron - or was it John Garney? - sent some very interesting documents relating to Simon Blondeau's acquisition of his property in Dayton MN in 1859, which commenced with his becoming a citizen in 1857, and was preceded by a claim for 120 acres of land in 1856.

In the manner of the time, Simon gets his land by first occupying and then developing it. On November 17, 1856, at the Land Office in Minneapolis MN, his witness, likely his brother-in-law Alexis Cloutier, helped Blondeau prove up his claim, stating as follows:

"Alexis Cloutier a witness of lawful age being duly sworn deposed and says, I reside in Hennepin Co Min. Ter. And am well acquainted with Simon Blondeau, the applicant. He is a married man and has a family consisting of a wife and eight children. He is residing with his family on his claim to wit: the W ½ NW ¼ & N W ¼ SW1/4 of Section 9, Town 120 Range 22 West, upon which he commenced on the eighth day of September 1856, to make a settlement, by clearing away a piece of land on said claim and cutting logs. Since that date he has erected a house 34x16 feet in size, it has a double pitch board roof, two rooms, 2 doors, 5 windows of glass.

MILITARY BOUNTY LAND ACT OF MARCH 3, 1855.

LAND WARRANT,
No. 85,511.



Register and Receiver's
No. 577

Land Office, *Minneapolis Min. Ter. Nov 17th 1854.*

WE HEREBY CERTIFY, That the attached Military Bounty Land Warrant, No. 85,511 was on this day received at this Office, from *Simon Blaudreau* of *Hennepin* county, State of *Min. Ter.*
Anders Register.
R. Russell Receiver.

I, *Simon Blaudreau*

of *Hennepin* county, State of *Min. Ter.* hereby apply to locate and do locate the *West half of the North West 2^d or North West 1/4 South West* quarter

of Section No. *Nine* in Township No. *One hundred twenty* of Range No. *Twenty three* in the District of Lands subject to sale at the Land Office at containing *One hundred twenty* acres, in satisfaction of the attached Warrant numbered. *85,511* issued under the act of March 3, 1855.

Witness my hand this *seventeenth* day of *November* A. D. 18 *54.*

Attest:

Anders Register.
R. Russell Receiver.

Simon Blaudreau
Mark.

SAMUEL MARK

I request the Patent to be sent to

Land Office, *Minneapolis Min. Ter. Nov 17th 1854.*

WE HEREBY CERTIFY, That the above location is correct, being in accordance with law and instructions.

Receiver.

He has further improved said tract by cleaning away about 12 acres and fencing the same, and raised about 200 bushels of potatoes thereon. He has built a shed about 12 feet square.

He did not leave a residence on his own land in this territory to make said settlement. I have no interest whatever in the result of this application."

Alexis Cloutier

17th day of November 1856

The fascinating document, Blondeaus land grant, which I would think deserves further research, is an official United States of America document, signed by an agent of President James Buchanan, partially in printed "boilerplate" and partially handwritten, which says in relevant part the following:

"WHEREAS, In pursuance of the Act of Congress, approved March 3, 1855, entitled an "An Act in addition to certain Acts granting Bounty Land to certain Officers and Solders who have been engaged in the military service of the United States," there has been deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE, Warrant No. 85,511 for 120 acres, in favor of Richard C DeKay who serviced in the name of Richard C Decay, Private, Captain Gales Company, New York Militia, War 1812.

With evidence that the same has been duly located upon the West half of the North West quarter and the North West quarter of the South West quarter of Section nine in Township one hundred and Twenty of Range Twenty Two in the District of lands formerly subject to sale at Minneapolis now Forest City [later Dayton] Minnesota containing one hundred and twenty acres.

According to the Official Plat of the Survey of said Lands returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the SURVEYOR GENERAL the said Warrant having been assigned by the said Richard C. DeKay to Simon Blondeau in whose favor said Tract has been located.

NOW KNOW YE, That there is therefore granted by the UNITED STATES unto the said Simon Blondeau as assignee as aforesaid and to his heirs the tract of Land above described: TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said tract of Land with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said Simon Blondeau as assignee as aforesaid and to his heirs and assigns forever.

/signed/ James Buchanan, President of the United States of America, first day of November in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and Fifty Nine, and of the Independence of the United States the Eighty fourth...."

Like so much in ordinary family history, documents like this one raise innumerable additional questions. I ask myself, for instance, how does Simon Blondeau come into possession of land in Minnesota apparently owned by a New York Private in the War of 1812, long before there was such an entity as Minnesota? How did the Private

come to own the land? Was he alive when it was transferred to Blondeau? A quick internet search comes up with a tantalizing possibility.

http://dunhamwilcox.net/bios/clinton_bios.htm. Scroll down to the reference to Dr. Samuel Gale. It simply raises even more questions, but suggests that we may not be talking about the War of 1812....