

The French Settlements.

Besides the French Canadians and Metis who are scattered throughout the outlying districts of Saskatchewan, there are five French settlements, or Missions, located on or near the South Branch of the Saskatchewan river. Of those settlements St. Laurent is the oldest. It was originally composed of those plain hunters who used to meet and pass the winter on the South Branch a little above what is now known as Fish Creek. It was subsequently augmented by the arrival of other plain hunters from the south, and by emigrants from Manitoba, who spread themselves along the river from Fish Creek to what is now known as St. Louis de Langevin. Numbers also settled around what is now known as Duck Lake, or Stobart, and some around Fort Carleton. St. Laurent mission was established in 1873 by Rev. Pere Andre, now of Calgary. The Duck Lake mission was also established by Rev. Pere Andre in 1874. Rev. Pere Touze is now in charge of the mission. He also teaches the school. The mission of St. Antoine, Batoche, was established in 1882, the first resident missionary being Rev. Pere Vegerville, now of St. Albert. This mission is now in charge of Rev. Pere Moulin. The mission of St. Louis de Langevin was established in 1886, by Rev. Pere Lecoque, who also has charge of the Fish Creek mission. A postoffice has recently been opened in this latter settlement on section 42, township 40, range 2 west of the third meridian, called Alvena. There are schools in all the settlements except the latter. There is a postoffice at St. Laurent mission, a telegraph office and a store. Rev. Pere Faurmond has charge of the postoffice. There is a postoffice at Duck Lake known as Stobart, and a trading post kept by Wm. Stobart & Son, and managed by W. H. Mitchell. There is also a gristmill, at which excellent flour is made. There are three stores at Batoche mission, a postoffice and a saloon. There is a store at McDougall's crossing, St. Louis de Langevin, and a postoffice known as Bouchere has recently been opened on sec. 11, tp. 45, range 27.

Throughout the above settlements the soil is of good quality, and wood, hay and fresh water are abundant. In fact, no more desirable field for farming and stock raising could be found. Cattle and horses are numerous. W. H. Mitchell, of Duck Lake, established a ranche in that settlement a couple of years ago, and has been continually adding to his stock of thoroughbred horses and cattle. Last year very little farming was done by the Metis with the exception of those of St. Louis de Langevin, who all had good crops and are in a fair way to become independent. Mail arrives at Bouchere from Batoche, and returns, every Monday.

Fish Creek and Batoche will always be memorable as having been the scenes of the struggles between the Metis under Louis Riel and the Canadian troops under Gen. (now Sir Frederick) Middleton, in the spring of 1885.