



The *Great* Canadian
Catholic Hospital History Project

Documenting the legacy and contribution of the
Congregations of Religious Women in Canada,
their mission in health care, and the founding and operation of Catholic hospitals.



Projet de la *Grande* Histoire
des hôpitaux catholiques au Canada

Retracer l'héritage et la contribution des
congrégations de religieuses au Canada,
leur mission en matière de soins de santé ainsi que la fondation et l'exploitation des hôpitaux catholiques.

**Sacred Heart Mission
Fort Simpson
1858-1958**

by
Rev. Father S. Lesage, o.m.i.

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T. H. M. Lesigne

SACRED HEART MISSION

1858-1958

A Historical Sketch Written By
Rev. Father S. LESAGE o.m.i.
Superior.

FORT SIMPSON N.W.T.

Srs Grises de Montreal
Maison-Miere
Archives

*En témoignage de ma reconnaissance
pour ce à votre Institut
O.S. Levesque
Omnis*

**SACRED HEART
MISSION**

1858 - 1958

FORT SIMPSON N.W.T.

HOMMAGES



LEO DESCHATELETS
Superior Generalis OMI

Le TRES REVEREND PERE
LEON DESCHATELETS, O.M.I.
SUPERIEUR GENERAL DES O.M.I.

Le T.R.P. est né à Montréal
le 8 mars 1899.

Il a été ordonné prêtre à Ottawa
le 6 juin 1925.

Elu Supérieur Général le 2 mai 1947.

Le T.R. Père nous a appris que l'un
des premiers fondateurs de la mission
du Sacré-Coeur, le R.P. Z. Gascon, était
son grand-oncle.

Lorsqu'il avait à peine 7 ans, le petit
Léon rencontra le vénérable Mission-
naire et en reçut une bénédiction spé-
ciale. L'événement resta profondément
gravé dans son souvenir.

"En me bénissant", nous a écrit le
T.R. Père, "il ne se doutait guère qu'il
implorait la protection du ciel sur le
futur Supérieur de sa Congrégation à
laquelle il était fortement attaché."

Le REVEREND PERE
H. HARAMBURU, O.M.I.
SUPERIEUR PROVINCIAL

Le Révérend Père est né au diocèse
de Bayonne en France en 1913.

Ordonné prêtre en 1939, il arriva au
Mackenzie en 1946 et demeura à Fort
Résolution où il devint Supérieur en
novembre 1949.

Le Révérend Père Haramburu a été
nommé Vicaire des Missions en janvier
1956.



Son Excellence Monseigneur J.-M. Trocellier, o.m.i., Evêque d'Adramyte,
Vicaire Apostolique du Mackenzie.



Jean-Marie Trocellier naquit à Tuzet au diocèse de Mende le 5 novembre 1888.

Il fut ordonné prêtre le 26 mai 1920.

Le jeune Père Trocellier arrivait au Mackenzie en 1921 et fit ses débuts Missionnaires à la Mission de Fort Good-Hope.

Il missionna ensuite à Fort des Liards de 1922 à 1925.

Fondateur de la Mission d'Aklavik en cette même année, il missionna dans la suite à Coppermine et sur la côte Arctique.

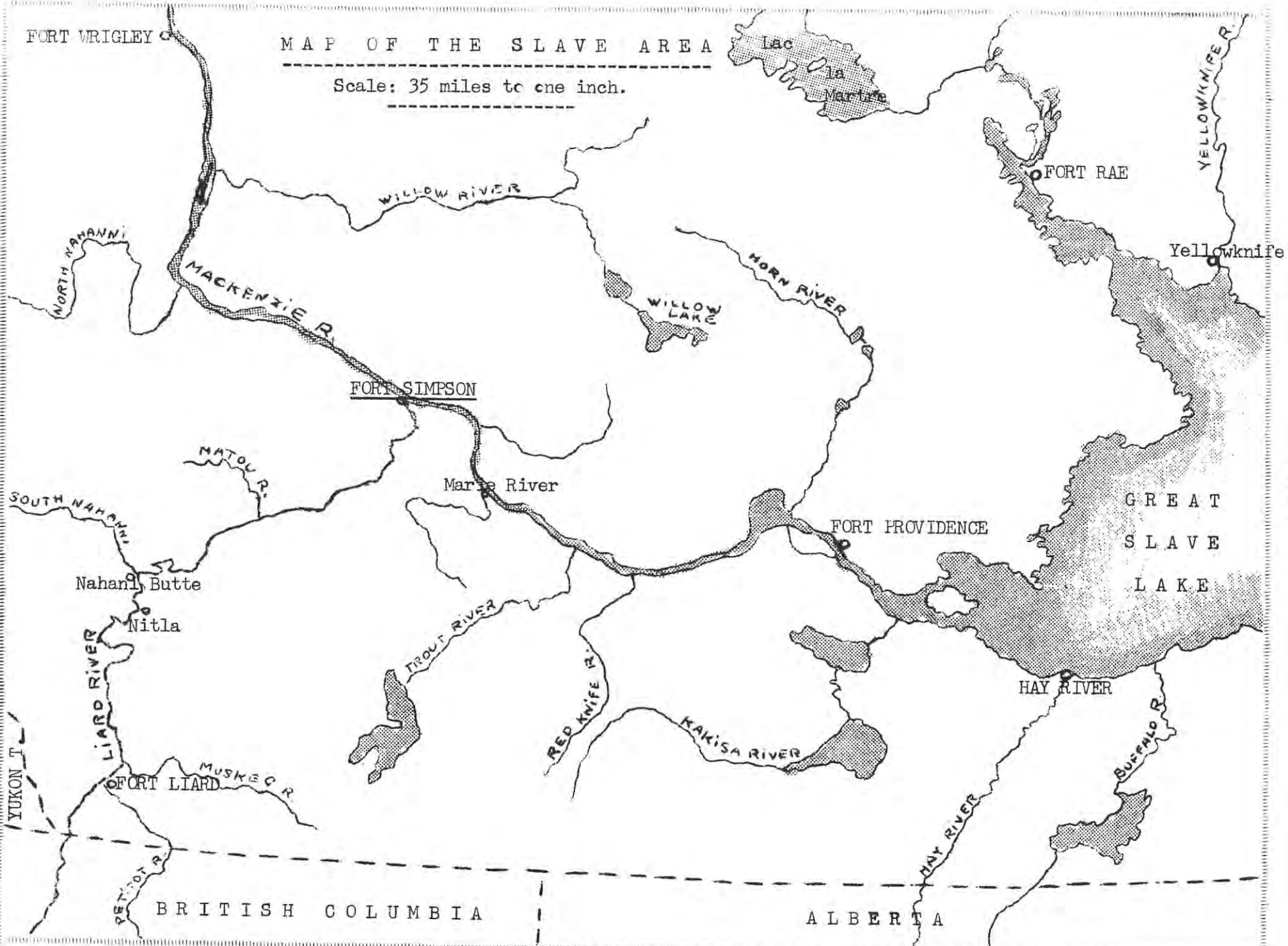
Le Père Trocellier était Supérieur à la Mission d'Aklavik lorsqu'il fut appelé à l'Episcopat en 1940. Sacré Evêque le 8 septembre, il succéda à Son Excellence Monseigneur G. Breynat en 1943.

Le vénérable Vicaire Apostolique est décédé à Montréal le 27 septembre 1987 après dix jours de maladie. Ses restes ont été transportés à Fort Smith et seront déposés dans la crypte de la nouvelle cathédrale en construction.

R. I. P.

MAP OF THE SLAVE AREA

Scale: 35 miles to one inch.



1858 - 1958
Sacred Heart Mission
FORT SIMPSON N.W.T.

FOUNDATION

1858-1894

MONDAY, AUGUST 16th 1858.

Rev. Father H. GROLLIER o.m.i. landed on Simpson Island in late evening.

There was a crowd of people gathered there for the summer visit and business. The first Priest was welcome by a number of Métis and Indians who were pleased to see him coming to them. The others, as curious observers, gave little attention to the event. There were also the chief trader and clerks of the Hudson's Bay Company, their employees mainly métis. A number of Indians from other settlements and clerks of other H.B.C. posts had crowded here as usual; some 50 employees on the York Boats on which Father GROLLIER had travelled completed the crowd of some 300 people who witnessed the foundation of the Sacred-Heart Mission.

Father GROLLIER was then 32 years old; he had ministered among the Chipewyans for six years on Lake Athabaska, In July of that year 1858, he had taken up residence at Fort Resolution where from he sailed down to Simpson. The Missionary, who knew well and spoke fluently Chipewyan, could well converse with the Slaves and thus initiated his ministry among the people of Simpson. So the Priest gave instruction to his new flock, teaching them the main truths of Religion and rules of Christian morality. He taught them the "Our Father", the "Sign of the Cross" and said the common prayers in their presence. As a result, 34 children were offered for Baptism, while 11 adults asked to be received into the Church. Father GROLLIER blessed 5 marriages, and in a report to his Bishop he wrote: "My trip to Fort Simpson was a triumphal march". (1)

However, his march was put to an end on Saturday 21st. Forced to leave, the Priest dedicated the Fort to the SACRED HEART OF JESUS and asked in His love a place for the poor Indians. He went aboard the same York Boat and returned to Fort Resolution. Meanwhile the Rev. J. HUNTER, archdeacon of the Church of England, who had arrived in Simpson at the same time than

the Catholic Missionary, took up residence on the Island after a-month visit at Fort Liard.

SECOND TRIP DOWN THE MACKENZIE RIVER.

In the course of the winter, Father GROLLIER planned a second trip down the Mackenzie River for the foundation of a Mission at Fort Good Hope. In the meantime, Bishop TACHE of St. Boniface, requested from the H.B.C. Governor, G. SIMPSON, protection and support for his Missionary. From Norway House, the following letter was sent to Bishop TACHE, dated 15 June 1859 :

To B.P. ROSS, Esq., and all.
Officers in charge of posts,
Mackenzie River District.

" Gentlemen,

This will be handled to you by the R.P. H. GROLLIER, who under instructions of the Bishop of St. Boniface and with the sanction of the H.B.C., proceeds to Fort Good Hope to commence an Indian Mission. Père Grollier has been assured of a Passage in the Company's craft down the Mackenzie River, and the Hospitality of the Company's establishment at Fort Good Hope, during the ensuing winter.

" Commending this Missionary to your personal civilities,

(Signed:) George SIMPSON.

This passport had been deemed necessary because a petition had been signed at Fort Simpson by Mr. ROSS and his employees requesting that no Roman Catholic Priest be allowed hospitality on the H.B.C. barges to carry on missionary work at Fort Simpson and in the Mackenzie District. (2)

Provided with such a permission, Father GROLLIER sailed from Resolution on a H.B.C. barge and landed again in Fort Simpson towards the 18th of August 1859. The Priest ministered to his neophytes only for a few days, but remarked that until then they had remained faithful. (3) He conferred baptism to 18 persons, most of them children. Then the infant Church numbered some 70 members, and a year later claimed a membership of a total of 90 Catholics.

FATHER Z. GASCON, A MONTREALER.

Father GROLLIER had come from Good Hope in August of that year 1860 to continue his pastoral duties among the people of Fort Simpson, and also to meet Father Z. GASCON, a Montrealer stationed at Fort Resolution since a year. While Father GROLLIER returned to Good Hope, the 34 year old French Canadian Priest assumed the task of instructing and training the new converts in the Catholic Faith. There were only 20 adults who were either Métis, with some previous religious instruction from contacts with other Missions to the South, or Indians with some knowledge of the Christian religion. The remaining portion of faithful was formed of infants and children in their youth. For the next 4 years, Father

GASCON was to nurse them in the principles and practices of their Christian Faith. His work was necessarily limited since his people lived only a few weeks in the settlement and had no permanent residence on the Island. Moreover, a guest of the H.B.C. and without a house of his own, the Priest could hardly carry on at will his pastoral duties.

Following a first Patsy landing his new flock, he paddles up to Liard in early September of that year 1860 for a month visit to the Indians of that Post, and on his way back to Simpson he confers baptism to the one-month old Macaire LENOIR and thence sailed up to Fort Resolution. In the course of the winter, the missionary began a series of long and hard trips to Liard via Simpson by dog team. As a result of his ministry, 2 adults asked for baptism and 11 children were offered to the sacrament of regeneration. On the 25th of March, Father GASCON blessed the marriage of Francois PICHE and Janice McDONALD in the presence of the H.B.C. Chief trader, B.B. ROSS and Clerk R.R. McPAELANE. On a second visit in the summer 1861, the Priest, who had come from Resolution, received into the Church 5 more adults and 10 children.

FIRST CATHOLIC BISHOP IN FORT SIMPSON.

This summer 1861 was marked by the first visit of a Catholic Bishop in Fort Simpson. Most Rev. H. GRANDIN, Coadjutor of Bishop TACHE of Saint-Boniface, met here with Fathers GASCON and SEGUIN on August 14th. Religious services were held and a high Mass sung with the liturgical pomp possible at that time. A 12 years old boy and 3 adults were baptized by His Lordship, while Joachim LENOIR and Louise ENADEZE received from him the nuptial blessing, on August 18th. A few persons received Holy Communion and 8 were given the sacrament of Confirmation. One of them was an old lady who originated from Alaska and had been instructed earlier by Father GROILLIER. (4) After a two-weeks visit to Fort Liard, Bishop GRANDIN remained again at Simpson during the second part of September and thence departed for Fort Good Hope.

A year later, the Bishop and Father GASCON visited Simpson again, and conferred a number of baptisms. A large number of Indians gathered around them for religious instruction and prayers. However, they remarked that many others showed indifference towards them. In 1863 we find Bishop GRANDIN and Father Gascon together again on this island towards the middle of August, for the usual spiritual exercises. In the course of the visit, Peter TRINDELL was received into the Church on August 23th by Father GASCON and married the same day at the age of 25 years by Bishop GRANDIN to Suzan ANAKON.

FATHER E. GROUARD AMONG THE SLAVES.

A young Priest, who had come the previous year to Chipewyan, had joined the two Missionaries on this Island. He was Father E. GROUARD, aged 23 years, who assumed then the direction of the infant Church of the Sacred Heart, by conferring his first baptisms on August 27th and 28th. By that time, Bishop GRANDIN had returned to his residence at Fort Providence and Father GASCON to his at Resolution. But the new pastor of Simpson sailed to Fort Liard in September for a two-week visit

among the Slaves who had been evangelized since 1860 by Father GASCON. And he hurried back to Fort Providence to take charge of that Mission. When the three Missionaries conferred together about the establishment of a permanent Mission on this Island, they must have considered it premature. As they observed the conditions surrounding their small congregation of adults, the results achieved and the prospects for an immediate future, they must have worried about their faithful and the difficulties awaiting both the Pastor and his flock.

THE PEOPLE OF FORT SIMPSON.

It is timely at this stage of the new foundation to glance at the people of Simpson then, the environment and the activities carried on in those days. The population of the Fort and surrounding camps was estimated at about 300 Indians. One third was Catholic. Of that number, some 35 adults comprised the practising members of the Church, while the others were infants and youths. Little religious instruction had been assimilated by those adults with perhaps a few exceptions. And a minimum of rules of Christian morality was the maximum they could practice. The largest portion of the population was either pagan or registered as members of the Church of England. The fact that representatives of two different Churches offered to the Indians the Christian faith and appealed to them for their respective membership must have confused their ignorant and primitive minds. The fact that a representative of the Church of England resided on the Island and with the sympathetic support of the local H.B.C. personnel had an adverse influence towards the Catholic Priest and his exclusive principles and practices. For instance, when the Catholic Missionary called on a number of Indians and ask them to join with him for religious instruction and prayer, they queried about the amount of tobacco, tea, sugar, etc, they would be given in compensation. Superstition and sorcery were rooted deep in the minds and lives of the primitive Slaves, as in other parts of the world.

DIFFICULT TASK.

The position of the priest was then very difficult. And religious influences were perhaps the most difficult to cope with. The H.B.C. factors and traders were, as a rule, hospitable and kind to the Catholic Missionary. For the latter, there had been no need to explain to his flock the religious differences. However, occasions arose when the Priest was compelled to state and defend his traditional Catholic faith. And it was extremely delicate for a Missionary of French nationality, who desired to stand well with his obliging friends, neighbors and hosts of Scotch origin and presbyterian or anglican faiths, to discharge his pastoral duties. True, it was only natural that men of pronounced Protestant ideas should prefer the absence of the Catholic Priest, while they invited and supported the Protestant missionary.

CHALLENGE TO THE BISHOP.

Bishop GRANDIN was faced with such delicate a situation, during one of his visits, at the table of his hosts. The conversation had turned to a subject that accounts even today for anti-Catholic feelings.

One officer told the Bishop that he and Father GROLLIER had taught the Indians that "All Protestants go to hell..." That no Priest had preached such a doctrine to the Indians was, of course, sure enough to Bishop GRANDIN. On the other hand, what assurance could there be that none of their hearers had drawn this false conclusion from the truths preached to them? This was a challenge to the Bishop who with calm and confidence said to the honorable gentleman: "Sir, come with me and let us inquire from some of our people if that is what they have been taught. The honesty of the gentleman is evident from the fact that he went out at once with Bishop GRANDIN and got into conversation with the Catholic Métis about the Fort. Of course, they all denied having heard such an objectionable doctrine either from the Bishop or Father GROLLIER. As the little Jean-Baptiste Pepin, Bishop Grandin's personal attendant came on to the scene, the honorable gentleman questioned him at the request of the Bishop who declared: "He is present at all my instructions, whether in the french or native tongue." - "Tell me, my boy," asked the Factor, "is it true that 'all Protestant go to hell', on account of their religion?" - "No," was the boy's reply, "not if they are convinced that their religion is good; but yes, if they believe it to be wrong and yet hold it."

Bishop GRANDIN, always so attentive and so sparing of the feelings of others, was all the more gratified by this answer, because it had never occurred to his mind to give a special instruction on this point to the old Beaulieu's grandson. In relating the incident, the Bishop remarked that the french Canadian Métis were not at all pleased with the sort of cross-examination they had been subjected to. "My Lord," they said afterwards, "if you had made the least nod, we'd have taught him a lesson!" Thereupon, Bishop GRANDIN commented saying: "The 'courreurs des bois' in the 50s and 60s of the 19th century were not always model Catholics, but they would have died for their Priest and Catholic religion." (5)

ZEAL OF FATHER GROUARD.

It was the task of Father GROUARD to strengthen the Faith of his flock and train them into moral practices. He made his second appearance in Simpson in early June 1864. Filled with zeal, the young missionary preached the word of God 'in season and out of season' and urged the indifferent Indians not to harden their hearts. Five adults answered his call and were baptized, while 21 children were taken to the sacrament of spiritual regeneration. Later, in late August, when he returned from a visit to Fort Liard, Father GROUARD received into the Church 3 more adults, 4 children and blessed the marriage of Alexis BEAULIEU and Marie LAFFERTY, on the 26th of August, in the presence of Olivier LAFFERTY and Zéphirin DURAND.

Father PETITOT, a young Priest from Fort Providence, accompanied Father GROUARD then and assisted in the conduct of religious exercises. The Missionaries observed that the Indians showed less interest in religion and fear of the Priest. Father GROUARD remarked that the death of a man he had baptized in June caused some ones to hold the Catholic religion responsible for it. Thence, the lie was peddled around saying: "The Catholic religion and the baptism of the Priest are causing death." - Incidentally, one Catholic Indian called on the Anglican minister for a visit and asked for tobacco. Having murmured some prayers and taken the tobacco he went to his tent. Soon he felt remorse, put aside the tobacco, walked to a Catholic neighbor and

queried if he could yet be admitted to the prayer of the Priest. This incident and others reveal to some extent the religious struggle of the infant Church and the anxiety of the Pastor. With a worried mind, then, Father GROUARD sailed to Fort Liard for the usual mission and returned to Providence in the late fall.

VISIT OF THE SECOND CATHOLIC BISHOP.

1865 was marked by the visit on the Island of the second Catholic Bishop, Most Rev. H. FARAUD, the first Vicar Apostolic of the Mackenzie Missions. The 57-year old Bishop landed in Simpson with Father GROUARD on August 25th. All the Indians in town gathered to see and hear him. The Bishop who spoke fluently Indian dialects charmed his audience and conducted the usual spiritual services. Father GROUARD played the organ during Mass and prayer, singing also hymns in Indian language. Some of the Indians who knew the hymns answered with the full strength of their lungs. As a result of their teachings and prayers, the Missionaries conferred 40 Baptisms and blessed 3 marriages. Father GROUARD had made an early visit in June and a third one in the late fall on his way back from Liard. Meanwhile Bishop FARAUD had gone down the Mackenzie River. And the Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission departed for Fort Providence about the 8th of October, leaving behind his flock struggling against sickness and starvation. An epidemic of scarlet fever caused the death of 50 persons during that summer 1865 in and around the Fort.

SWEAT AND SORE THROAT.

In March of the following year, the Missionary put on his snow shoes and marched into Simpson on the 17th. Thence he hurried to Fort Liard with his companion where they built the first residence. Towards the middle of June the Priest paddled down to Simpson, "conducted the Mission" baptized two children on the 14th and 16th respectively. Thence he sailed up to Providence. In August he is on the Island again. By coincidence, he travelled along with the Rev. W. KIRKBY, and both went up to Fort Liard on the H.B.C. barge for their respective religious work. The Priest, who had returned to Simpson about the 20th of September, conferred baptism to the one-month old Charlotte SARCELLE the following day. Father GROUARD has related the difficulties met by the early Indians to learn the prayers and even to make the sign of the cross. At one time, he said, I have seen men and women sweating before they could learn them. How many times I have made my throat sore by repeating to them the prayers of the Rosary. While in Simpson, the Missionary gave his earnest care to the Catholic families employed at the Bay. In the fall of that year, he camped in the shack of one of them and there discharged his pastoral duties.

This was the kind of life lead by the Missionary during that period and the kind of ministry he performed for five more years. Twice a year, he travelled from Providence to Liard first in March by dog team with a stop over in Simpson, and thence from Liard in May by canoe through Simpson and on to Providence. And again from Providence in August or September through Simpson and on to Liard, and then back to Providence in late October.

1867 : ARRIVAL OF 4 GREY NUNS AT PROVIDENCE.

The year 1867 brought great interest to Father GROUARD who rejoiced over the coming at Fort Providence of 4 Grey Nuns on the 28th of August. He witnessed their arrival and the warm reception given to them, who had come to conduct the education of the Slave Indians in a newly built Residential School. The event may not have drawn the attention of a large portion of the population of the Mackenzie. In fact, it has been given so little publicity in the annals of Education, that even in our days, some writers supposedly well informed are ignorant of the event. Misses L. TOEWS and V. RATZLAFF, writing in the N.W.T.T.A. review of the June 1954 issue, candidly asserted that : "...The St. Peter's Residential School, built at that time (1894), was the only Indian Residential School on the Mackenzie River..." (page 9). It is a wonder that the publishers of the Review failed to note the error or cared little about the assertion of historical falsehood.

The itinerant Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission, who was not concerned with publicity, departed from Providence immediately after the arrival of the Grey Nuns, for his regular visits

VILLENEUVES AND LAFFERTYS.

His first ministerial function was the blessing, on September 8th 1867, of the marriage of David VILLENEUVE to LaLouise, in the presence of Louison LANOLX (LAFFERTY) and William CHARLES.

A year later, the Priest baptized Joseph VILLENEUVE, son of David, aged 2 months, in the presence of Joseph and Catherine BOUVIER on August 24. Fourteen baptisms were conferred and 5 marriages blessed during that year 1868. - Of particular interest in 1869, in the High Mass sung in open air by Father GROUARD on Sunday June 15 ! The altar was set on two cases. Métis and Indians sang the 'Kyrie' with full voice. As usual the Priest spent most of his time in giving religious instruction to the flock. And he noted then that all his members of the Church had remained faithful and he expressed his pleasure over the fact that no defection had occurred yet

One branch of the LAFFERTYS may take pleasure in being recalled that their ancestors in Simpson were married on June 20th 1870. John MacIVOR an employee of the Bay, originating from Red River, Manitoba, wedded Marie SONTE in the Presence of Baptiste LAMALICE and Joseph SAVOYARD. Father GROUARD blessed their union. Leza was born of them a year later. Alexis LAFFERTY who had born 7 years before Leza, married her later on. Leza was born at Bear Lake where her parent lived then. Father LECORRE travelled to Bear Lake during that winter and visited the MacIVORS at Franklin. He had walked there by dogs with a companion in a cold day of February. The Priest was so weak and tired when he entered the house that John's wife did not recognize him. Father LECORRE who was their guest for a few days was given a warm reception and treated most kindly. He baptized the baby Leza on the 17th, the latest born of three children. The others were Catherine and Alfred. Leza and Catherine made their first Communion together in 1881. Their mother Marie had another sister, named Kotseilla Catherine, who married to Corneille YALLY

of Fort Good Hope on June 19th of that year 1870. At least four other children were born to the MacIVORS. And two are living yet. The twin sister Caroline, born in Simpson, is in Carman, Man., and is now 80 years old. Her younger brother Frank lives in St. Claude, Man., with his wife Marguerite GAGNON, and have several children in Winnipeg and in Saskatchewan. Dozens of other MacIVORS, descendants of John and Marie, live today in the Prairie Provinces. - Father LECORRE, relating his visit at Franklin in 1870, said of John MacIVOR that he was one of those generous hearts eager to render service and to spend themselves for their neighbor.(6)

PRESENCE OF THE PRIEST NEEDED.

The Indians of Netla were then a portion of the flock of the Catholic Priest. On March 15th 1871, Father GROUARD conferred baptism to two of their children during a visit made there on his way to Liard. One of them was Henriette MOZEINT'A.

Later in August, the Missionary paid his last visit in Simpson and dwelt in a house placed at his disposal by the H.B.C. Manager, Mr HARDISTY. An incident happened then and reveals the practice followed by the Priest during his pastoral duties. One early morning, after he had gone around the Fort ringing his bell for the Mass, the Father sat at the organ to play and sing hymns before Mass as usual. To his surprise, he experienced that he had lost completely his voice and was then unable to sing. Nevertheless, he celebrated the Sacrifice of the Mass and administered the Sacraments.

Twice in the summer he had had contacts with the members of his Church and the other people who had gathered in the Fort. To his sorrow, the Missionary observed a growing antagonism between his people and the Protestants. There were more than one controversy between the Catholic Métis employed at the Bay and the Scotchmen, their employers. The Métis encourage the Indians to remain faithful to the Church and gave them a fairly good example. They argued wholly on various controversial subjects, in particular on the celibacy of the Priest. Baptiste LAMALICE reported that one day, he was accused of gloomy blindness, of superstition and idolatry, because a picture of the Virgin Mary was in a conspicuous place in his house. Baptiste, although he had little education, was bitterly vexed by such a lack of manners on the part of the honorable gentleman. He sharply retorted that he was not stupid enough to worship a piece of paper. While he worshiped God only, he gave honor to His Mother, whose picture deserved a place in his home just as conspicuous as that of Queen Bess in the honorable gentleman's house. At any rate, Father GROUARD could measure then the deep ditch that was delving between the two portions of the Town on account of religious principles and practices. He realized that the presence of the Priest for a few weeks only in a year among his people was not enough to give them the religious instruction they needed and to inspire them with a taste of virtue and a dislike of sin. A large number of young children who had been baptized during the past ten years had acquired only a minimum of Christian truths and practices. Those young people, becoming adults, were to form the largest portion of the Catholic Church in a near future. Most of them lived in scattered camps out of contacts with the Priest and without the assistance of the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist. The Mission-

nary could foresee the the struggle both from within and from without which the infant Church would inevitably go through.

FATHER V. DEKERANGUE'S STRUGGLE TO CHRISTIANIZE THE INDIANS.

Father GROUARD could not hope that the Hudson's Bay authorities would give him permission to built a house of his own on their own property. Moreover, even with that permission, he could not hope that they would transport on their York boats enough material for that purpose. In those days, the amount of freight allotted to each post was limited and the sort of supplies imported was also limited to the main necessities for trading fur. After 9 years of devoted services to the people of Simpson, while he ministered among them in their own language, prayed for them and with them, Father GROUARD went aboard a canoe and sailed to Providence where he was to take charge of the Mission.

Father Victor DEKERANGUE had been appointed to Fort Liard and charged with the care of the Fort Simpson Mission. The 34-year old Priest had learned the Slave language at Fort Providence for three years and was well prepared for his new pastoral duties.

The young Missionary landed on the Island with some apprehention, in early September of that year 1871. Sadly enough, his first pastoral duty was to conduct the funerals of one of his parishoners, on September 4th, in the presence of Alexis BEAHLIEU and John MacIVOR. Had the new Priest foreseen then that, in the course of his 21 years of ministry in the midst of the people of Simpson, most of his Catholics were to become nominal members of his Church? Surely not. Moreover, did he hope then to bring into the Church a portion of the rest of the population? Hardly so, because Father GROUARD had warned him that "we would have to carry on a hard struggle before we could christianize the Indians." (7)

MEDICINE MEN AND SUPERSTITIONS.

Besides the difficulties inherent to the Christian Faith and practices for primitive people to acquire and observe, there were those arising from medicine men and sorcerers who had a strong hold on their fellow-men. Entangled in a network of superstitions, the Indian had confidence in the charms of the medicine man who claimed to cure the sick, pacify the spirits, terrify his audience and cast a spell upon the enemy. The means used were trickery and jugglery, often coupled with immoral and vicious practices. Knowing that the Catholic Priest would prevent the people against them and their evil practices, the medicine men turned up to be fierced enemies of the Missionary and used all means to oppose his pastoral duties.

Another difficulty met by the Catholic Priest in converting the Indians was their habit of trading their wives. Mindful of all that and after a first contact with the flock, Father DEKERANGUE went up to Fort Liard in late September of that year 1871 and took possession of the residence built previously by Brother BOISRAME, Father GROUARD, and his companion Antoine LAVIOLETTE.

A third Catholic Bishop honored Simpson by his visit in 1871. In late February, Bishop CLUT, Coadjutor of Bishop FARAUD, Vicar Apostolic of Mackenzie. The 40-year old Bishop, who spoke fluently the Chipewyan, ministered a few days among the small group of Catholics and baptized two children on the 23rd. Thence he walked down the Mackenzie River and on to the Yukon. Father DEKERANGUE's second pastoral function in Simpson, on his second visit in June of that year, was to conduct another funeral, that of Pierre DENEBA, in the presence of Alexis BEAULIEU and John MacIVOR.

POSSESSED BY THE DEVIL.

An event had taken place shortly before, which passed unnoticed, ; Father DEKERANGUE baptized a 25-year old man, who died later possessed by the devil. The Priest, who related the fact, was a deeply religious person but none the less free from superstition. A learned and trained man in Christian truths, The Missionary could well recognize the diabolical possession from merely natural and physical causes. Father DEKERANGUE had observed, as well as his predecessor, the influence of the devil sowing evil thoughts into the mind of the Indians, and impressing weaker individuals by his subtle evil spirit. The Priest knew well too that the Slave people as well as any other people were prone to evil and easily bent to seductive pleasures without the devil's influence and possession. Yet the Priest had stated and recorded the fact of one diabolical possession which reveals the sad state of the Indians in the early years of and prior to their Christianization.

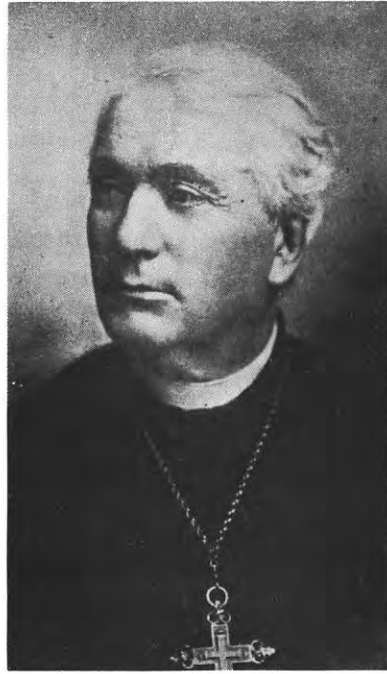
Fort Simpson then had been nicked-named "the devil's Island", although no record give evidence of a diabolical possession in and around the Fort. A legend is still heard today saying that one day the Catholic Priest while reciting the divine Office along the River bank, was approached by the devil under the form of a man. The Priest looked surprised at the unexpected stranger who told him : " You are loosing your time here, this Island is mine." - Although I have serious doubts about the truth of this fact, I quite understand why this Fort has been called "Devil's Island". The early Catholic Missionaries who came into close contacts with the people of Simpson and their activities then called Fort Simpson the "Babylon of the North". Father DEKERANGUE saw fit to call it : "The Paris of the North", and "Island of sins". Such an unpleasant name was not given to this place on account of diabolical possession of its people; it was given on account of the devil's influence on them, but also due to the fact that Simpson was then the gathering center of people of different races, colors tongues and religions.

SIMPSON ISLAND : "TOWER OF BABEL".

Because of that, Bishop GRANDIN has named this Island : "the Tower of Babel". Years before the coming of the Missionary, Simpson had been the central post of the Mackenzie District, because of its geographical location. It had been and was then yet the residence of the Chief Factor of the H.B.C. for the whole Mackenzie. All the Company's barges, perhaps 12 in number, from McPherson to the North, and from Portage-la-Loche to the South, met at Simpson with their crew and yearly freight. Each York boat was manned by a crew of 10 Métis and Indian voyageurs, and capable of carrying about 5 to 6 tons of freight. In June, but particularly



Rév. Z. Gascon: 1860-63



Mgr V. Grandin, o.m.i.: 1861-63



Rév. E. Grouard, o.m.i.: 1863-71

VISITORS



Mgr H. Faraud, o.m.i.: 1865



Mgr I. Clut, o.m.i.: 1871



Mgr G. Breynat, o.m.i.: 1903

FORT SIMPSON SETTLEMENT IN 1916



Left to Right: Indian Agency. Old R.C. Mission. New R.C. Mission. H.B.C. Anglican House. Anglican Church. Indian Shacks.
At the left on the "Flat". Indian tents may be seen along the River Bank.

in August, these men and H.B.C. officials from neighbouring Forts crowded on the Island for some time. There were Scotchmen, Orkney Islanders, Norwegians, Englishmen, Métis of both Scotch and French descent, Dogrib and Hare Indians from northern points with a number of their families; there were Chipewyan, Yellowknife and Cree Indians from the South; there were Slaves from Wrigley Liard and Providence, some with their families also. Of course, most Slaves from Simpson district flocked on the Island on that occasion both for business and social entertainment or recreation. Most of those came on their own, but others were housed at the expense of the Company. The floating population for part of the summer was estimated at some 300 people, while during a few weeks it reached the 500. No wonder then that such seasonnal gatherings occasioned lively activities, some excitements, and a number of immoral disorders. Father GASCON and Bishop GRANDIN noted that there were in those days scenes of discords, cases of bigotry, avarice, lies and routs. Mention is made also of immoralities such as drunkenness, fights, adulteries, and sessions of sorcery have also been observed. (8)

Among the Company's voyageurs and employees, about 60 were Catholics, according to Father DEKERANGUE, in addition to over a hundred Indians who had become members of the Catholic Church until that year 1872. In such an environment and in the midst of such people, the Priest performed then his pastoral duties, for a period of a few weeks during the summer. It must be said here that the relations with the Officials of the Honorable Company were cordial. It is matter of record also that the rule of the Company over the native people was, on the whole, a benevolent one. The Chief Factor was Justice of Peace and the only representative of the Government of Canada. True, scenes of drunkenness may have taken place and intoxicating liquor distributed in limited amount by some individuals. Yet, the law passed and enforced by the Company then prohibited even the importation of rum on the York boats. The Anglican Bishop BOMPAS, who resided at Simpson in those days, declared that such abuses were rare as well as other of immoral character. (9)

In late fall of 1872, Bishop CLUT, on his way from the Yukon, made a second visit on the Island. He conferred 3 Baptisms and blessed 2 marriages. One of them was of Isidore BEGUE who wedded Suzanne LENOIR (widow of Peter?) on September 3rd. Both were baptized on that day. The following summer, the Priest blessed the marriage of widower Peter TRINDELL to Françoise, widow of the late Francis HOOL, on June 20th. Father PETITOT, Missionary of Fort Good Hope, spent some weeks with his companion then and assisted him in giving the 'the Mission'.

THE SMALL FLOCK SHAKEN UP BY DIVERS INFLUENCES.

In 1875, Bishop CLUT paid another visit to his Missionary and conferred Baptism to three children and one adult on June 20 and 21. - And years went by as Father DEKERANGUE discharged his pastoral duties twice a year among the small flock shaken up by divers influences.

Bishop CLUT, who was well informed on the conditions of the Catholic community of Simpson, reported then that the Island was the 'Citadel of

Protestantism'. And the Pastor himself said that "I am too often the voice that cries into the desert". Asking for prayers, he wrote to his benefactors that Satan had built here his seven-tower fortress. From student to priesthood, he begged also for prayers that the Master send here a Pastor according to His divine Heart and make of this Island a Catholic Island. (10)

Undoubtedly, the Father was sharp in his expressions. But when he referred to the 7-tower fortress of Satan, we know that he was not identifying the religious activities of the Anglican Mission with those of Satan. A man of religious tolerance and inspired with the charity of Christ, the Missionary referred mainly to the evil spirits who sowed evil thoughts in the minds of a portion of the population and checked higher Christian aspirations by their subtle temptations. Opportunities for such evil influences are too easily offered to Satan when the representatives of two different religious groups worked in the same field and make their religious appeal to the same people. True, Father DEKERANGUE and other Missionaries claimed that their flock was subject to unchristian influences on the part of anti-catholic proselytes. Whatever truth there might be in their assertions, we lack documentary evidence to ascertain at least the degree to which such adverse influences were exerted.

At any rate, the Missionary claimed that he was doing a little good and that a number of Indians became more tamed in spite of calumnies spread in their midst. We note in passing the baptism of William EZEA on June 18th 1881, the two-year old son of Joseph DENEBA and Nancy TSANKON. It may be recalled here that Nancy was a sister to Marie SONTE, wife of John macIVOR. I should like to point out here, without disturbing Ezea's conscience, that his case exemplifies the adverse Catholic influences complained of by Father DEKERANGUE in those years. - Another example is that of the late Ratsi or William BEGUE, son of Isidore and Suzan LENOIR who was baptized at the age of two years by Father DEKERANGUE, on June 20th 1876. - A more interesting case is that of Marguerite NITSE baptized by the same on the 15th of June 1879 at the age of 6 years. Her father NITSE had died and her mother NATSELA was an infidel. Marguerite was baptized again in 1922 by error at Resolution. Of course the sacrament was given 'under condition', since its effect cannot be received twice. Now at the age of 85 years, Marguerite, who is Widow HOPE says that she does not mind to have been baptized twice in so many years.

SUCCESS IN WORK IN SPITE OF A POOR HEALTH.

During the winter 1885-86, the Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission fell seriously ill, while alone at Fort Liard. He sent two Indians to get Father LECOMTE, who was then at Fort Nelson, in order to receive the Sacrament of Extreme-Unction. Fortunately, the Father grew better in the meantime and recovered his health well enough to continue for 8 more years to minister among the people of Fort Simpson.

1886 was marked by an impressive ceremony of Confirmation performed by Bishop CLUT on June 27th. Twenty seven children and adults received that sacrament. The Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission had had some other consolations during that summer. He received into the Church Corneille YALLY at 30 years of age and whose marriage was blessed on the same day, June 27th. Later in September, Johnny and Francis MOSES joined the Catholic Church at

the age of 22 and 20 respectively. Johnny's marriage to Charlotte SARCELLE was blessed two years later, and his mother Helen became a Catholic a week later.

Meanwhile Father DEKERANGUE took charge of the Fort Wrigley Indians who had been visited hitherto from Fort Norman by Father DUCOT. He made his first visit there in early June 1887, conducted the 'mission' and conferred baptism to two children.

Some events of different characters deserved notice that took place in 1888. One was the baptism of the 3-year old George SIBBESTON in the presence of Lucienne SANDERSON. His mother Julie was not a Catholic, and his father Thomas was employed at the Bay. - Another was the baptism of Johnny NORWEGIAN at the age of 32 years, whose parents were unknown to the Priest. On the same day of July 22nd, his 8-year old son Francis - Joseph, called TETSO was conferred baptism on the same day together with his 6-year old daughter Eliza.

1888 : FIRST STEAMER BRINGS IMPROVEMENTS TO SIMPSON.

The other event was the landing at Simpson of the first motor-boat built and owned by the Hudson's Bay Company. The steamer was to replace the 40-foot York boats for passenger and freight transportation along the Mackenzie River. For some 60 years the York boats had replaced the canoes fell into disuse. It was now a radical change in water transportation that henceforth affected favourably Fort Simpson and her people. The new steamer "Wrigley" pushing barges loaded with freight could land on the Island a larger amount and variety of supplies for furthering trade business and insuring all necessities of life. Father DEKERANGUE must have availed himself of the new facilities both for transportation and supplies. A number of brigade men no longer required by the Bay settled down around Fort Simpson with their families, either as employees or trappers, while others in smaller number continued to serve on the new boat. Chief traders from some Post with their clerks continued to gather at Simpson during the summer. This place was still the business and geographical center of the lower Mackenzie. J. S. CAMSELL was then the Chief factor in charge of the whole Mackenzie District. The resident population on the Island number about 12 persons in all. Outside the H.B.C. barricade of fort, there were only a few scattered log huts occupied by the Métis and Indians servants of the Bay. At the North end of what was called then the Settlement was the Anglican Mission. A few acres of land were cleared. (11) - The itinerant Father DEKERANGUE occupied one of those log huts during his visits in Simpson.

In March 1889, he walked from Liard for the Easter celebrations during which he conferred one baptism. In June, he ministers at Fort Wrigley and later in the summer, returning from Providence with Father E. GROUARD, on the steamer "Wrigley", Father DEKERANGUE busied among his flock. Father LECOMTE had come from Liard then, so that the three Missionaries joined their efforts and zeal for the souls of the Indians in giving religious instructions and administering the Sacraments.

The following year, Father GROUARD travelling aboard the Steamer, paid another visit to his former flock during which he conferred baptism to a 30-year old man whom he had instructed and married the previous year.

THE TALENTED FATHER LECOMTE.

From that year 1890, the 37-year old Father LECOMTE was a regular visitor on the Island. For 10 years a Missionary among the Indians of Nelson and Liard, he had such a thorough knowledge of their language that they envied his ability and facility in speaking it. The Priest knew also the English language and spoke it so well that even the Protestants took pleasure in attending the Easter and Christmas Mass to listen to his sermons. Father LECOMTE has written various manuscripts in slavy and in particular a dictionary most valuable to the other Missionaries. While at Nelson, the Priest who had no organ then, sang hymns with his 'golden voice' accompanied himself on a guitar on feasts' days. Socius of Father DEKERANGUE for 10 years, he is called an angel of prayer, a laborious person and a jovial man. The popular and apostolic young Priest nursed the infant Church of Fort Simpson during the whole summer 1890, except for a few weeks at Wrigley in early June. Again in 1891, the Missionary who walked from Liard attended to his pastoral duties and baptized a child on the 27th of January. Meanwhile, the Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission returned to his function and in June met here with Father GROUARD and Father LECOMTE, for the spiritual benefit of the Catholic population.

A young Priest from Fort Providence, Father L. BROCHU came also to assist his Oblate colleagues in late September. It is apparent that those prolonged visits of the Missionaries prepared the establishment of a residence on the Island in a near future. It was also motivated by the failing health of Father DEKERANGUE in need of assistance. Father LECOMTE was also ill and in need of rest. In spite of a tumor in the heart region, which often caused flow of blood, he walked from Providence on snow shoes in January of the following year 1892 to attend to the spiritual needs of the Catholics of Simpson. It was his last visit. And his last pastoral function was the administration of baptism to the 4-month old Honoré CORNELLE, brother of MODESTE. He returned to Providence, but unable to receive there the medical care needed for his critical condition, he was taken out to St. Albert. The doctors and Sisters of Charity failed to stamp out the disease that led him to his death on the 16th of September at the age of 39 years. Father DEKERANGUE saw with great sorrow his socius going and lost a most efficient co-operator. During that summer, he was assisted by another young Priest, going down to Good Hope then, Father H. AUDEMARD. The Missionary had learnt Slavy while at Providence a few years earlier.

ANOTHER LOSS FOR THE SLAVE AREA.

We note in passing that the Priest who visited Simpson and ministered among the Indians seldom had the assistance of Lay Brothers to care for temporal needs. Brother CARROUR of Providence accompanied Father DEKERANGUE in the summer 1887; and later, Brother Mark LEBORGNE from Liard gave occasional assistance to the itinerant Missionaries of Fort Simpson. This want of help contributed to aggravate the failing health of Father DEKERANGUE who, in 1893, was forced to abandon his

pastoral duties. Twenty-two years of continuous travel from Liard to Nelson and thence to Simpson and Wrigley and of occasional dire privations particularly painful to his delicate constitution had brought him into a state of acute sufferings. Bishop CLUT, coming up from Good Hope in June, found the Priest in the pangs of death, alone in a log hut. His last priestly duty was performed in conferring baptism to the 11-month old Pierre SAUTEUX, on the 9th of that month. Bishop CLUT took his Missionary aboard the steamer "Wrigley" towards the end of the month and both went on to Fort Smith and thence started for the Hotel-Dieu of Montreal. However, Father DEKERANGUE had to be confined in Holy Cross Hospital at Calgary. The 56-year old Oblate Missionary offered generously the sacrifice of his life to God for the salvation of his beloved Slave Indians, was administered the Sacrament of Extreme-Unction by Bishop CLUT and expired on the 8th of October 1893.

CHRISTIANISM AGAINST PAGANISM.

35 years had passed since the first Catholic Priest had brought the Catholic Faith to Fort Simpson. Only half of the whole population had embraced it. And most of those were then nominal Catholics. Surely, the infant Church had gone through trials and the diseases of indifference and apostasy from within her members and had suffered hardship from without. The firmness of Faith and of religious practices of the small portion of her members, under the devoted direction of their apostolic pastors, had brought and led her to the age of youth.

"Tobacco Christians", as of all ages races and lands, were not prepared nor willing to accept the Gospel of Christ and to follow Him crucified. Infidels were slow to forsake polygamy, adultery and sexual debauchery for the sake of Christian marriage. Sorcery, superstitions and the idea of an earthly happiness for the soul after death were so deeply rooted in their lives that the revealed truth of Christianity had no or little appeal to their uncultivated minds. It is significant to learn that Sir Alexander MACKENZIE, who came North prior to the Missionaries, was later on much critical of their methods of evangelization of the Indians. He claimed that they (the missionaries) should have begun their work by teaching them some of the useful arts which are the inlets of knowledge and lead the minds by degrees to objects of higher contemplation. True, the honorable explorer, who was provided with abundant monies to discover new worlds and open new fields to rich fur business, could have made use of his authority to provide the begging Missionaries with the facilities for teaching some of the useful arts. It has been the methods of the Catholic Church, if and when humanly possible, to train and enlarge the minds of the Natives by education to enable them to apprehend better the spiritual truths of the Gospel. The Residential School in operation at Fort Providence was a living example of her methods. And soon, Fort Simpson was to become another field of her methods and experience in laying the foundations of the Kingdom of Christ on earth.

CONCLUSION.

Father DEKERANGUE, like his divine Master, has spent and sacrificed his life for those he loved. And like at the time of Christ, among those for whom he sacrificed his life and who listen to his teachings and

calls, some believed and were saved, while others hardened their hearts and were lost.

History repeats itself. The history of the missions of all ages, races and lands has taught the same story which the early missionaries and their successors have learned as observers and actors in the foundation and the establishment of the Sacred Heart Mission on this isolated and remote Island.

Marching at slow and stumkling pace, the Catholic Church will now begin to pace less faltering, under the spiritual direction of Father BROCHU. True, the large number of his nominal Catholic flock will falter for some time, but the true disciples will continue to pace towards their destiny.

ESTABLISHMENT

1894 - 1933

FORT SIMPSON AREA IN 1894.

It is estimated that there were about 135 baptized Catholics in the Simpson area, out of about 300 Slave Indians, in 1894. That number represents only one-third of those baptized during the first previous 35 years. The other two-third (350 baptized Cath.) had either died or migrated. A small percentage was of Métis and white origins. The total population residing in the Settlement numbered 40 and was formed of 15 Whites, 13 Métis, and 12 Indians. J.S. CAMSELL was chief factor, his son Fred, fur trader and C.T. CHRISTIE, accountant. Other employees at the Bay were : the BERENS, McPHERSON, and HOPE families. Rev. REEVES was in charge of the Anglican Mission. Father BROCHU in charge of the Catholic Mission, and not Father LECOMTE, as C. CAMSELL states erroneously in his book "Son of the North". Father LECOMTE had died in Calgary the previous year. - The residential population had increased, because of the Officers and crew of the steamer "Wrigley" that wintered in the fort. There were also more buildings, a small herd of cattles, small field of grain and vegetables and an electric light plant at the Bay. (12)

FATHER BROCHU PERMANENTLY RESIDING.

A Montrealer born in 1858, the year of the foundation of the Sacred Heart Mission, Father Laurent BROCHU arrived from Providence in early June to occupy a log house lent by the Hudson's Bay. And he was allowed to make use of another log house as a church. They were located on the east side of the Bay's quarters, while the Anglican Mission occupied the west side, at its actual site. The Priest had for 3 years learnt and practiced Slavy under the direction of Father LECORRE at Providence. He also had a good knowledge of English. - The first resident Priest in Simpson "to be nailed to the cross there..." in the words of Father DUCHAUSSOIS.

His first and only baptism in 1894 was of the 6-month old Marguerite LENOIR, who was to become the second wife of Alexis LAFFERTY in 1920. In September, he blessed the union of William MARSOLAIS to TSEKOYE. Father DUCOT of Fort Norman kept company to Father BROCHU for some time and conferred two baptisms. The Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission spent part of the winter visiting the Indians in their camps and at Liard with Father VACHER. And he wrote that he was greatly consoled for his many fatigues.

THE FIRST MISSION'S BOAT.

1895 brought the Missionary other consolations, when the first Mission's boat, the "St. Alphonse", landed at Simpson in June with Bishop GROUARD aboard and other Missionaries. Among them was young Father LEGUEN, en route to Fort Liard. The arrival of the first Mission' boat was quite an event for the Indians particularly. They were amazed at that, because, in their minds, the Honorable Company alone could have the privilege of such facilities.

The Pastor rejoiced over the conversion of Marie SAUTEUX whom he baptized on the 17th of June at the age of 24 years. He visited Wrigley in the early summer where a number of Indians from the mountains had gathered to receive instruction and the sacraments from the Priest. - And then came Christmass, the first to be celebrated on the Island by the Pastor and his flock. Father BROCHU, relating the event, said that 100 persons crowded in the church (which he called a fac-simile of the stable of Bethlehem) for the midnight Mass. Fifty received Holy Communion. Among them were the chief Sandison, Jacques, Pierrot, Gazon etc... The Missionary indicated his intention then to build soon a new chapel dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and more worthy of the house of God.

1896 brought the Missionary an assistant in Father P.M. VACHER, a young Priest who had come to Providence the previous year. A pupil of Father BROCHU in the Slavy language, Father VACHER was also a handy man in all things. In addition to their pastoral duties, they improve the interior of the house and chapel... and "went out" trapping occasionally to earn part of their living.

In early december, the Mission was the scene of an impressive incident when the 40-year old man MAIN-BRULE died suddenly. The funerals were held the following day in the presence of George SIBBESTON who remembers well the event, although he was only 11 years old then.

RELYING ON THE ACTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Bishop GROUARD whose residence was at Chipewyan, paid a visit to his Missionary in the summer 1897. Isolated as they were throughout the year, and at the mercy of the official of the H.B.C., the Missionaries were in need of the guidance and directives from the ecclesiastical authority for both the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Mission. Father BROCHU realized more than ever before, that his people had acquired a very minimum of Christian truths and morals. In spite of his knowledge of the Slavy language, he experienced the difficulties of teaching supernatural beliefs to the primitive minds and of training them in the practice of the commandments and sacraments. Thus little progress had been made in the work of evangelization. Relying more on the action of the Holy Spirit, and saving influence of Christ, the Priest made occasional conversions. Thus, two persons were brought back to the fold in 1898. Father GOUY had been ministering at Wrigley and Norman for the past 5 years, replaced Father VACHER as assistant to the Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission. It was he who baptized the late Billy Edwards at the age of three years, on the

2nd of January 1898. And in July, Father BROCHU baptized Rose-Alice BERENS at the age of 10 months. Both were given the sacrament of Baptism 'under condition' since they had been baptized before by the Anglican Minister. In the course of the following year, 14 others reintegrated the Catholic Church. One of them was Joseph ANTOINE at the age of 17 years, by Father BROCHU who blessed the union of his father NAKEKON to Madeleine the same day of July 16th 1899.

The turn of the century witnessed some exciting and other events in the life of the Missionaries of Simpson. The Klondike rush urged the Bishop of the Mackenzie to travel by winter trail from Providence in the spiritual interest of the invading white population. In April, Bishop GROUARD arrived on the Island and was welcome by Father VACHER of Wrigley who happened to be alone at the Mission. They both walked along to Fort Liard for a visit to the lonely Father LEGUEN.

FATHER'S OWN HOUSE BUILT WITH AN OLD BOAT.

After break-up, the Bishop drifted down the Liard River in a boat built by Father VACHER and loaded with rough lumbers for a new mission at Fort Wrigley. He conferred baptism to Pierre Yo'in at Nitla, and from Simpson proceeded for a visit to the Yukon. It was the last visit of Bishop GROUARD on the Island, during which he conferred with the Pasror and his assistant in the interest of the Mission.

Father BROCHU had foreseen for sometime an event that took place in the fall of that year 1900. For reason that I have been unable to ascertain, The manager of the H.B.C. instructed the Father to evacuate the house hitherto placed at his disposal. And he was given three weeks to find another shelter. Relating the sad news, Father BROCHU wrote: "I found myself in a very sad situation and which I had feared for some time. I was given the rude order to evacuate the house within 3 weeks and even refused a piece of lumber to make a shelter. Happily that I had some boards from a boat left to me by the miners. Thus I have been able to put the floor and roof of the small kitchen I am now occupying. The Bay's manager is an honest man in the main. (Mr. RAE, perhaps?). If the people of Simpson, Captain Mills in particular, had not compelled him, he would have not signed the order of expulsion." (13)

Thenceforth, the Missionary welcomes his people in his own house built with his own hands. He was alone again, since Father GOUY had been transferred to Hay River. In early 1901, Father LEGUEN walked from Liard to visit his confrere for one week. Later in March, Father BROCHU travelled to Liard for a few-week stay and to replace Father LEGUEN who wanted to visit his neighbouring mission of Fort Nelson.

LITTLE PROGRESS IN THE EVANGELIZATION.

Meanwhile the Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission observed little progress in the evangelization of his flock. It is perhaps timely to mention that the Anglican Church had had for the past 45 years a resident Minister. Rev. W.D. REEVE replaced Rev. W.W. KIRKBY in 1869. After a period of ten year, Rev. W. Spentlove took his place.

In the meantime, Rev. W.C. BOMPAS had come North, and made Bishop of the Mackenzie River with residence at Fort Simpson. In 1881, the Anglican Mission was headed by Rev. W.G. CARTON. The first day School was opened on the Island a few years earlier by Miss WHEELRIGHT under the auspices of the Anglican authorities. Undoubtedly, the latter were working under favourable conditions in the Settlement, drawing considerable influence in their favour. On the other hand, the Catholic Missionary had no permanent residence for 35 years, and during that period he made only seasonal visits among a portion of his flock. Even when Father BROCHU took up residence in 1894, the house in which he lived was not his own, but belonged to the unfriendly, although courteous Hudson's Bay Company. The shelter he built with his own hand in 1900 was rather a hovel than a Priest's residence which contrasted miserably with the fine and large Anglican Mansion and Church sitting only a few yards away. Thus, humanly speaking, it appears that the Sacred Heart Mission had been and was yet then seriously handicapped: a factor partly responsible for the little progress made by the Priest in the evangelization of the Indians.

However, any follower of Christ and apostle of the Christian faith knows that prayer and a life of self-sacrifice in the service of the Master are powerful means which people of good will do not long resist. So, Father BROCHU making use of those forces, succeeded gradually in bringing back to the fold a number of sinners. But others hardened their hearts and refused to yield to the call of their Master and Pastor.

For 9 years, the Oblate Father spent and overspent himself for the love of them. Dozens of his Catholics had died of epidemics in the last years. Working in such ordeals, he was wearing himself out, at the age of 53 years.. Eventually, Bishop GROUARD transferred Father BROCHU to Hay River. The last official function of the Pastor of the Sacred Heart, on June 28th 1903, was the administration of the Sacrament of Baptism to the 8-month old Cecilia ZAZO who was to become the mother of Corinne, Therese and Marie-Rose BONNETROUGE. Two years later, the health of Father BROCHU broke down and forced him to return to his native province of Quebec. The first resident Pastor of this Mission is still remembered by the old generation of the people of Simpson, who have his name and memory in veneration.

FATHER VACHER, "JACK-OF-ALL-TRADE".

The new Pastor of the Mission was Father P.M. VACHER. As we introduce him, we note that the Mission's Boat (St. Alphonse) came to Simpson with the most essential supplies for the Missionary. In addition, the Priest raised a small garden providing some vegetables. And to complete his menu, he snared rabbits and hunted wild fowls. Moreover Father VACHER cumulated the functions of house maid, cook and jack-of-all-trade in and around the house, since no Oblate Brother was available then. The learning and practice of the Slave language was one of his main duty. The new Pastor who was a skill carpenter took time off to complete the house built by Father BROCHU and the log house that served as a church. When the new BISHOP G. BREYNAT made his first visit to the Sacred Heart Mission, he said of both the house and church: "True, the Master of all things and his Missionary are satisfied with little for the love of souls." (14)

Shortly after his appointment, Father VACHER went to Providence to attend a meeting of the regional Missionaries called by Bishop BREYNAT. Methods of evangelization were discussed in the light of the changing conditions in which both the Missionaries and their people lived. Directives were discussed and adopted for both the spiritual, social and material welfare of the people confided to the pastoral care of the Oblate Missionaries.

Towards the middle of August of that year 1903, Bishop BREYNAT followed down Father VACHER, and when they arrived at Simpson, the 15-day old George MODESTE awaited for Baptism which was conferred on the 16th.

Shortly after, Bishop BREYNAT, Fathers VACHER and LEGUEN, and Brother Marc LEBORGNE sailed to Fort Liard. They tracked up most of the way. The young Bishop wrote afterwards: "One must have passed through it to have an idea of the difficulties to overcome."

WATERING THE GOOD SEEDS.

Father VACHER was then 34 years old and in charge of the Simpson and Wrigley Missions. We have little historical documents relating his missionary activities among the people of Simpson during the 8 years of his leadership of the Sacred Heart Mission. We know though that he continued to center his instructions on the basic truths of Christianity such as the existence of God, the soul, Heaven for the good and hell for the wicked. A large number of children needed to be taught the main prayers and the commandments, and inspired with the love for the good and horror for sin. The adult portion of his flock had a persistent and confused notion of a continued mundane life instead of the spiritual immortality. Only a few of them had grasped the true meaning of the Sacraments and their effects on the souls. They were those who gave the Priest some spiritual consolations. Occasionally too, Father VACHER brought back a lost sheep. In the course of that period, 50 Baptisms were conferred to children and adults. - Meanwhile the young Father ANDURAND had become his socius, and in 1911 took charge alone of the slowly growing church of Fort Simpson. It may be said of Father VACHER that he watered the good seeds that others have harvested when the Master of the field deigned to make it grow and ripen.

A PIECE OF LAND GRANTED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

When the Missionary left for Fort Nelson, he could already visualize the material improvement that was about to be initiated by his successor at the Mission. Glancing at the future, the Priest foresaw the spiritual benefits that were soon to result from the impending independence of the Pastor of souls in the discharge of his priestly work. The visit of the Federal Minister responsible for the Government and the people of the North made in 1910 began to produce results. The Honorable Frank OLIVER who had been the guest of Bishop BREYNAT and the Missionaries along the Mackenzie River, and who had taken advices from them, was a man of vision and determination. Favourably impressed by the work accomplished by the Catholic Missions, he deemed it fair to give them some compensation in granting Bishop BREYNAT a portion of land in every post where they occupied a Mission.

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW RESIDENCE.

In those years, a number of free fur traders had come to open new stores. On this Island, LAMSON had just started the fur trade business.. New and better transportation facilities were provided by the Bay since 1908, when the "Mackenzie River" replaced the small "Wrigley". Bishop BREYNAT had transferred the center of his administration from Chipecwan to Fort Providence, easing the exchange of correspondence and services. More Missionaries were made available for the Missions of the Mackenzie.- An Indian Agency was established on the Island in that year 1911. Surely, Simpson, hitherto the center of administration and business of the Hudson's Bay Company, was on the eve of impending developments, both material and spiritual, when Father VACHER received instruction to go to Hay-River. At that time the Priest was working at the construction of a new residence, to keep pace with future needs of the Pastor and his flock. It must have been with regret that he left his task unfinished. Father ANDURAND, his assistant for the past 3 years and his pupil as well in the study of the Slave language, inherited of this unfinished task in that summer 1911. The new Pastor had been a Missionary at Fort Norman for 7 years since coming North from his native France in 1902. He was a short but stout man and a person endowed with much ability. - The 35 year-old Priest inaugurated his new functions by the blessing of the union of George SIBBESTON to Henriette LAFFERTY on the 10th of September of that year 1911.

UNLUCKY FIRST BROTHER.

By that time, Brother Derrien KERAUTRET, who had come from Fort Good Hope aboard the Mission Boat (St. Marie) had taken up residence with Father ANDURAND. One of his first task was to continue the construction of the new Mission started by Father VACHER and to make it habitable for the winter. The 29-year old Brother, while working on scaffoldings towards the end of August, fell down and broke his two wrists. Father BÉZANNIER of Fort Nelson, who was replacing Father ANDURAND during a visit to Providence, was in the house writing letters. When he heard the 'bang' he rushed to rescue the wounded Brother and brought him to the Anglican Mission for medical assistance. The Rev. LUCAS applied hot water on the swelled wrists of the aching Missionary, who learnt later on that he should have been treated with cold water. Fortunately, the "Mackenzie River" arrived at Simpson the same evening and took Brother KERAUTRET to Fort Providence for proper nursing. In early October, the Brother returned to Simpson aboard the barge of Napolen LAFFERTY and George SIBBESTON coming back from fishing.

The oxen of Mr. CARD were responsible for the accident which crippled the Brother for almost two years, During the night, they had come near the house under construction, and harassed by mosquitoes they robbed their back against one of the poles that held up the scaffolding. The platform had been disjoined with no apparent showing and when Brother KERAUTRET stepped on it, it fell apart, and went down with him. Of course, it was no fault of Mr. CARD who, although a former minister and a free-mason, was in freindly terms with the Catholic Mission, as we shall say later.

FRIENDLY RELATIONS.

In the course of the fall, a fire caught on the Island that threatened to burn the saw-mill of the Indian Agent. Father ANDURAND and Brother KERAUTRET spent several night watching and stopping the flames that consumed the brushes near the saw-mill and thus saved it from destruction. Mr. CARD had been so grateful to the Missionaries that when the time had come to haul the 300 logs ready for sawing, he lent them his oxen and placed his saw-mill at their disposal. - Another reason for the friendly relations between the Agent and the Catholic Mission was the courtesy paid by the latter to Mr. CARD and his wife and his daughter when they arrived at Simpson earlier in the summer. They had rushed off the boat to look over their new post and quarters, but overlooked the time for dinner. Since they were not invited by the Anglican Mission which they visited, Mr. CARD and his family walked back to the boat. But there, the cook declined to serve dinner because of the late hour. Vexed by the treatments received at both places, Mr. CARD returned on the Island where he met Father ANDURAND and Brother KERAUTRET. By courtesy, the Priest offered them a dinner which was gladly accepted, and served by the Brother immediatly. Then the Agent related the Catholic Missionaries the story I have just told.

FIRST PROJECT OF A HOSPITAL ON THE ISLAND.

In the course of their conversations, Mr. CARD expressed the desire that the Catholic Mission build a Hospital on the Island. Later on Father ANDURAND reported his wish to Bishop BREYMAT who met the Agent the following summer for discussion of the proposal. Mr. CARD wrote to his Department recommending the proposal and explaining the need of such an institution for the welfare of the Indians.

In November of that year 1911, Brother KERAUTRET went with his bruised hands to cut logs with Jos. VILLENEUVE, the 12-year old son of Joseph, senior. Towards the end of the winter, they had cut all the logs necessary for the construction of the proposed new Hospital. - Meanwhile, the two Missionaries had made a trip by dogs to Providence, where the Brother was called to pronounce his perpetual vows.

In the summer 1913, Brother KERAUTRET was asked by his Bishop to help taking down to Arctic Red River a scow of supplies. Thus ended his stay at the Sacred Heart Mission. And he was the first Oblate Lay Brother to reside at Fort Simpson.

Brother KERAUTRET now in his 76th year of age is yet a helpful member of the St. Joseph Mission at Fort Resolution, where he spent 42 years of his missionary life. During the 12 other years he worked at Good Hope, Simpson and Aklavik. Although 45 years have passed since he left this town, he remembers well the older generation and is interested in the development of this Mission and Settlement. In closing his letter relating some of the events of his years at Simpson, Brother KERAUTRET asks to be remembered in our prayers.

SURVEY OF THE WHOLE ISLAND.

Other events occurred in the same summer 1913, that were to bear considerable influence on the people and life of Fort Simpson. A detachment of ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE was established in the Settlement with jurisdiction over the surrounding district. - At the same time, a Federal Government party of men initiated the survey of the whole Island and divided the land into lots for the use of the occupants and prospective settlers. When Bishop BREYNAT concluded an agreement with the Federal Government for the construction and operation of a Hospital at Simpson, the assurance was given that portions of the surveyed land would be allotted to the Sacred Heart Mission. Because the Hudson's Bay Company delayed to answer a request to concede a piece of their land to the Mission for its use, Bishop BREYNAT obtained from the Federal Government for that purpose 60 acres of land covered by lots 19, 21 and 23. The Hudson's Bay Co. kept the land covered by lot 5 totalling up 95 acres. The Indian Agency received 70 acres which was reserved for the use of Indians, while the Anglican Mission was allotted lots 6, 7, 8 and 16 covering an area of some 43 acres. The remaining 250 acres of land on the Island belonged to the Crown. (16)

Under the same agreement made by the Government with the Mission, the latter was to build and own the Hospital, while the former promised to pay a capital grant of \$ 1,500 and a per-day grant of \$ 1.00 per patient.

PREPARATORY WORK FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE HOSPITAL.

As soon as the primary plans were made for the new establishment, the Superior of the Mission, Father ANDURAND, began the preparatory work for the construction. Brother KERAUTRET had started cutting brush and trees on the proposed site, in the spring 1913. Father MOISAN came from Fort Providence to assist the Superior in both the pastoral and material work of the Mission.

In the late fall, Bishop BREYNAT who had conferred with the Government in Ottawa, secured additional land for raising cattles, hams and the necessary produces to supply the Hospital and the Mission. Thus, lot 12 was purchased for the site of the new Mission; lot 17 for the Hospital, and lots 18, 20, 22 for farming purpose and future needs. In the course of a visit made by Bishop BREYNAT at Simpson in January 1914, it was agreed that the Father's residence built by Father VACHER and Brother KERAUTRET would be moved from the Bay's land to lot 12, its actual site.

The saw-mill owned by the Indian Agency was then a considerable boom to Fort Simpson. It supplied the R.C.M.P. with lumbers for their quarters, the R.C. Mission with lumbers for a residence, a shop, a warehouse and the Hospital, besides that required by the expending Indian Agency. A farm inspector, Mr. VON DER OSTEN came in that summer to take up his duties as assistant of the new Agent, Mr. T.W. HARRIS. At the same time, a new trading store was opened on lot 13 by LAMSON Co., if my information is correct. The Mission's staff with hired labor speeded up the clearing and ploughing of land. And in co-operation with the Agency, they cut and made new roads on the Island and across the channel in view of hauling wood and hay.

It was in the midst of those activities that Baptiste GAZON was conferred the Sacrament of Baptism at the age of 3 months by Father MOISAN on the 21th of July! Earlier in the year, Father ANDURAND had received into the Church the 40-year old John DENEYUA who would not resist any longer the call of God's grace. The two Oblate Missionaries, filled with the zeal of souls spent and overspent themselves both in and around Simpson and Wrigley, where they succeeded in bringing back to their duties or into the Church a number of adults. On July 18th 1915, it was the turn of JOUIN to receive the sacrament of Baptism at the age of 35 years.

CONSTRUCTION AND OPENING OF THE FIRST HOSPITAL.

Meanwhile the construction of the Hospital had started at the east corner of lot 17, exactly where stands yet the fateful barn-stable, and it was well under way in the spring 1916. The building measured 40' by 60' with a full basement, 2 floors and an attic. It was a frame construction with a French-style roof. Mr. OUELLET, Brothers LOUIS and MARC had busied relentlessly to complete the body of the building before August. Yet, it was not ready for occupancy when the four GREY NUNS of Charity arrived aboard the "Northern Trader", on July 20th of that summer 1916, to take charge of the new Hospital. They were Sister GIROUARD, Superior, Sisters BOURSIER, LATREMOUILLE and MARIE, the latter a Native from Fort Good Hope. The foundresses and their 6 patients were given a temporary refuge at the Father's residence sitting yet on its original site near the Bay. They occupied the main floor, while the Fathers moved to the second, and the Brothers took shelter in the attic.

In the following weeks, the Sisters went to work arranging the rooms apartments and beds in the Hospital. The blessing was made on the 30th, and the Sisters took possession of their new institution on the 7th of September, beginning then on this Island their corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The Hospital was to serve all the people of the lower Mackenzie to the Arctic Ocean. It was dedicated to St. Margaret in memory of the foundress of the Grey Nuns, MARGARET D'YOUVILLE. It was the finest as well as the highest building in the North. The erection of such a Hospital in such a place in those days was surely an act of religious rashness accomplished by Bishop BREYNAT and his personnel. One who reads the diary of the Mission and Hospital of those years is amazed at the difficulties in the construction and operation of the new institution. The Missionaries were inspired with a strong faith and gifted with an ardent love of God and neighbour, carrying on their daily task and labour.

THE MISSION GETTING ORGANIZED.

A new cemetery had been set aside near the Hospital. The first person to be buried in was a 84-year old lady from Nahanni, named NANCY and widow of the late 'Black Nahanni' otherwise called Pierre TUELI. It was on July 28th of that year 1916. A road was cut and made to reach the place. Rev. Father F.X. DUCOT, the 68-year old Oblate Missionary of Fort Norman who had retired, was the fifth person to be buried in the new cemetery. The Priest was in ill health and died unexpectedly on the 15th of August at the Mission.

We noted earlier that Father MOISAN was assistant to Father ANDURAND since 1913. The young Priest was an eager worker in both the material and spiritual fields of the Mission. Master in the use of the Slave language with 8 years of experience among the Indians he showed a particular zeal in teaching religious instruction to the children and to those who came in contact with him. He often replaced the busy Superior in answering the sick calls and administering the Sacraments. Every summer he went to Fort Wrigley to minister to the spiritual needs of the small Catholic population.

In the meantime, the personnel hurried the construction of a stable and temporary poultry shelter. Fences for parking cattles and hens were made while Brothers Marc LEBORGNE and Louis BAUDET had gone fishing to the Big-Island. They returned in early October with 12,000 fishes.

On October 28th, Mr. HARRIS and his family took refuge at the Mission, following the destruction of their house by fire. - One of the Government employees, the 32-year old Mr. W. JOHNNSON asked then to become a Catholic and was instructed by Father ANDURAND, who conferred on him the conditional Sacrament of Baptism.

OPENING OF THE St. MARGARET'S SCHOOL.

The year 1917 opened with the blessing of the Stations of the Cross in the Mission's chapel, that was yet at its original site. - The year was marked by the opening of the St. Margaret's School. The building erected near the road aside of the Hospital was of frame construction, measuring 30' by 22' with a seating capacity of 22 pupils. The one-classroom was heated by a central stove and furnished with 2 sole benches, serving as desks to the pupils who sat on low seats made by the teacher, Sister McGUIRK. The opening took place in September with 11 pupils in attendance.

The Anglican Day School that had been closed in 1913 reopened the following year. A Government report states that the average attendance then was 12 and 4 for the respective months of September and December. Twenty-six pupils however had been registered.

LIFE IN SIMPSON IN 1917.

A Doctor, by the name of McDONALD, came to Simpson occasionally to give medical attention to the patients of the Hospital and of the surrounding district.- The Indian Agency was busy with farming and saw-mill activities. - The Anglican Mission was also an active center. - The Hudson's Bay Company had on the Island an Inspector in charge of the neighbouring posts.- The R.C.M.P. patrolled a large area from their center in the Settlement. - This town had become an important place along the Mackenzie River. So much so, that when the Government Officials sought a place for the trial of the murderers of Fathers LEROUX and ROUVIERE, Fort Simpson was suggested as the normal location for the judicial event. However, for some other reason, it took place at Fort Smith.

July 8th of that year 1917 will be remembered because of the coming of 4 cows and 12 hens to occupy their homes on the Island and provide the personnel of the Mission and Hospital with the long desired milk and eggs. Oddly enough, the Reverend Mother General of the Grey Nuns came at the same time to visit her spiritual daughters: an event of great momentum for the new institution. Sisters DOSITEE and DAVY had come too and replaced Sister LATREMOUILLE who had been called back to Fort Providence. - By that time too, Pierre SAUTEUX and Cecilia were married by Father ANDURAND, on Aug. 2.

It should be noted here that the Fathers and Brothers occupied then a temporary house built in front of the Hospital and which turned to be a shop later on, until this day. Then also the Hospital Chapel on the second floor served as a church for the Sunday Mass and other religious ceremonies while the old church near the Bay was used as a shop.

In the course of his annual visit, Bishop BREYNAT administered the sacrament of Confirmation to 7 persons, including Mr. W. JOHNSON. - His Lordship made a daring expedition to Liard in his gaz-boat called "Rymer" and piloted by Brother KRAUT. They returned on the 26th of July, having been the first to navigate by gaz-boat up the Liard River. The following year, the Hudson's Bay Co. built the "Liard River" and initiated their transportation from that direction.

THE FIRST OF THREE TO INVADE THE NORTH.

It may be said that the year 1918 was marked by the birth of Patrice VILLENEUVE... and the arrival at the Mission of Brother Henry LATREILLE (called Brother HENRY) to shoulder in the work of Brothers MARC, LOUIS and GUEGAN. Brother HENRY was the first of the LATREILLES, although the youngest to invade the North. The tall, stout and powerful young man from Coteau Junction Qu., was 20 years old and went to work with the feeling of doing more day after day.

In the fall, Father GOUY came from Providence to preach the annual retreat to the Oblates and Grey Nuns and probably to get acquainted with the direction and administration of the Sacred Heart Mission. In fact, on the 1st of July 1919, the 50-year old Priest took charge, replacing Father ANDURAND at the head of the Mission. The latter went to Providence and afterwards to his native France where he died in 1948 at the age of 72 years.

Father GOUY might have been called a roving Missionary, having previously ministered at Fort Norman, Wrigley, Liard, Nelson, Providence, Hay River and Fort Smith, plus one year at Simpson under the direction of Father BROCHU. A daring man with a strong personality, the Missionary pressed the organization of the Mission activities in all fields. Father MOISAN continued to assist the Superior and acted as bursar for both institutions: the Mission and the Hospital.

The Pastor watching jealously over the morality thought necessary in February 1920 to inform a number of Ladies they would enter the church only accompanied by their husbands. The rule was passed on account of some immoral disorders in the Settlement.

THE WORK OF OUR DEVOTED BROTHERS.

Brother Louis BEAUDET was in charge of the garden and in that fall harvested 90 bags of turnips and 58 of carrots. Brother HENRY was a fac-totum. One day he is busy fixing the basement of the shop, another day he is building a fence around the chicken coop; other days he cut the green fields, then the oats and the barley; digs out the potatoes and hauls hay from across the channel; 3 oxen, 5 cows, 50 hens and 6 dogs need to be fed. - Brother Marc LEBORGNE went fishing with Mr. JOHNSON to l'Ile-en-l'air.

In October, an epidemic of jaundice and whooping cough stroke the population causing several deaths. All families were affected. Then Father GOUY called for public prayers to obtain protection from God, and on the 24th all children of the town, including the sick, were brought into the Hospital chapel in the afternoon, for their consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, during the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. An improvement was soon felt, although a few more persons have died afterwards.

In early winter, the Brothers cut, hauled and skidded 160 logs ready for sawing. They sifted and fanned 70 bags of oats and 9 of wheat. They also cut, hauled and sawed wood cords for the whole year. Hauling was made by oxen and dog-teams. The Fathers gave part of their time in manual labour. Thus Father Superior completed the exterior of the shop. Father MOISAN made a patent to manufacture butter. Both assisted in hauling wood and hay. Even the visiting Father BEZANNIER volunteered to assist Brother HENRY in cutting and clearing a road to the prairie called 'Peter'. - In April, Father GOUY heads a group of men, including the Brothers, to cut and clear a road to the channel.

An insignificant event happened in July with the arrival of two pairs of pigs that caught the attraction and attention of the whole town. Bishop BREYNAT who had arrived on the same boat... received little attention. New machines were brought for the farm: a mower and a cultivator; new land was cleared and broken; the Mission staff made a road from the top of the bank to the River in co-operation with the R.C.M.P. An addition was made to the stable; the grave yard was fenced. Later in the fall, Father GOUY organized a party of men to clear another road across the channel, and marked it himself all the way. The fall-fishing had been poor, but the crop of potatoes brought 280 sacks and 200 of other vegetables. Thus the food supplies were barely sufficient for the winter. One ox and one pig were butchered to insure the needs of the whole institution.

Brother LOUIS was then given care of the poultry and was milking the cows instead of the Sisters who could no longer discharge those function. Brother D'ANJOU arrived in September to give a hand to the others. The 26-year old Quebecer was given a warm reception. Meanwhile, Father ANDURAND had received into the Church Lucie GROSSETETE and blessed her union to Isidore THOMAS the same day. The end of December brought the annual celebration of the Christmass festivals with no particular incident. But we note in passing that Mr. T.W. HARRIS, Indian Agent, presided as in the past the children's party at the St. Margaret School. A function he performed every Christmas during his long stay in Simpson.

DIRECTORS



FATHER L. BROCHU OMI. 1894 - 1903



FATHER M. VACHER OMI. 1903 - 1911



FATHER C. GOURDON OMI.



FATHER J. LEGUEN OMI.



FATHER A. BCZANNIER OMI.



BRS. LOUIS BEAUDET

J. D'ANJOU OMI.

FATHER E. GOUY OMI.

MARC LEBORGNE OMI.



BR. JEAN-MARIE BEAUDET OMI.



OXEN 1919



OXEN 1925



BROTHER O. GOSSELIN OMI.

ON THEIR WAY TO NORMAN WELLS.

The Settlement witnessed unusual events in 1921, that were to change and speed up, for a while, the course of the quiet life along the Mackenzie River. Thirteen dog-teams pulled in Fort Simpson on January 1st, carrying men and their outfits, heading to the place that became Norman Wells. It was the beginning of the rush for staking oil claims that lasted for the rest of the winter. Two airplanes, owned by Shell Oil Co., flew over the Island on March 30th and landed on the Mission field near the stable. One landed safely, but the other broke one ski and its propellor in touching the snow-covered ground. It was quite an event, and the whole town crowded around to inspect the big birds. The Mission's shop was placed at the disposal of the mechanics to make the necessary repairs. On April 4th, one of the planes took off for a test. The following day, the other broke down again in taking off. From then on, the pilots and mechanics worked to make the repairs and set both planes in order. On the 20th, one aircraft took off first, but broke its tail, while the other went in the air all-right but flew to a near-by lake for landing. The weather had become warm and water began to run on the channel. On the 25th the pilots and mechanics boarded the one aircraft and from the lake flew to Peace River. The next day, the Brothers hauled the other airplane on land near the Mission. By that time, several prospectors who had gone to Norman by land, were returning to Edmonton for the registration of their claims.

After 'break-up' several parties landed on the Island and hurried down to the scene of rush. Father MOISAN and Brother LOUIS followed them down too.

TREATY SIGNED.

Another event that was to change the status of life of the In-Indians took place in Simpson in July of that year 1921. A party of Government Officials headed by Mr. CORNWALL arrived on the 8th. Bishop BREYNAT travelled with them on the "Distributor" in the capacity of advisor and mediator between the Government and the Indians. The conditions of the Treaty were proposed to a gathering of the whole tribe. At first many raised objections, but finally accepted the Treaty that was signed on the 11th. NAKEKON was then Indian Chief. 301 Indians were paid an annuity of \$ 5.00 a piece. On that July 11th, it was Confirmation day for Anna BOOSTRUM.

FATHERS' RESIDENCE MOVED TO THE CENTER OF THE ISLAND.

In August Father MOISAN was transferred to Fort Liard after 8 years of hard work and fructuous ministry. Brother D'ANJOU renewed his religious vows on September 19th. And with the month of October began the preparatory work to move the Fathers' residence from its original site near the Bay to the location it now occupies. It took 5 weeks to raise and pull it with oxen and capstans to its final place. - Meanwhile, an addition was built to the stable and a new pig house completed.

Brother HENRY, who had left Simpson a few months before, regretted that he would not see his work completed, which was for others to enjoy. The Christmas festivals were attended by a record number of people. Some had come from Willow Lake and others from Nahanni.

The staff of the Mission was then: Father GOUY, Superior, and Brothers Louis EMMETT, Marc LEBORGNE and Joseph D'ANJOU. Brother Medard LATREILLE arrived at Simpson to replace the latter in September 1922. He was 28 years old and the eldest of the "Trio". Father GOURDON returned to Simpson as assistant to the Superior. - An old-timer, she was in her teens when Father GROLLIER visited Simpson, passed away during that year. She was Emilie HOPE, whom Father GOUY baptized under condition at the age of 80 years, and who received the Sacrament of Extreme-Unction prior to her death.

A project suggested 10 years earlier by the former Indian Agent, Mr. CARD, was realized by the Brothers as they completed the construction of a house for the "old age people".

NEW CHURCH BUILT, OLD CHURCH TORN DOWN.

1923 will be remembered as a year of religious significance for the Sacred Heart Mission. The new church was built under the direction of Mr. BIRD. The Catholic population numbered then 291 souls, out of a total of 419. The immigration of Whites and Métis from South-West had swelled the Fort and neighbouring area. Visitors and business travellers who stopped over added their share to the activities of the community. Among them were Justice BUBUC of Edmonton and his judicial party. There were Doctors RICHARDSON and MC DONALD; an inspector of the LAMSON, Mr. WEST; and of course the Vicar Apostolic of Mackenzie, Bishop BREYNAT, on his annual visit.

By that time, Brother MARC had departed for Fort Providence and thence to his native France for well deserved rest. The other Brothers busied feverishly in clearing and breaking new land. And in addition to their routine works, they took apart the old church near the Bay and hauled the lumbers to be used for a laundry room. They tore down the old Mission house and framed the new Hospital well with its lumbers.

In the fall, an epidemic stroke again a large portion of the population. It became so dangerous that, in the absence of a Doctor, Mr. HARRIS despatched to Resolution two young men: James and Jonas LAFFERTY to get anti-diphtheric serum. They left on the 30th of October and made the round trip in one month.

It is quite unusual that a Bishop confers Baptism during his visits of the Missions. Well, that privilege and honor was reserved to Joseph TANKA. The 10-months old boy was made a child of God and a member of the Church by Bishop BREYNAT, in the presence of Chief Antoine NAKEKON, on July 19th 1923. On Christmas of that year, Isidore VILLENEUVE and Celine ANTOINE cemented their union 'for better, for worse' with the blessing of Father GOUY. In April of the following year 1924, it was the turn of Joseph VILLENEUVE to take for life in marriage Mary HARRIS. The new church, about completed, was solemnly blessed on June 22nd, Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Patron of the Parish.

MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS.

Oddly enough, the inauguration of the new church followed shortly the arrival on the Island of Andy WETTINGTON who started a trading post. - Oddly enough too, and at the same time, LAMSON Trading Co. sold out their store and business to the Hudson's Bay Co.

Father MOISAN departed for his native France after 19 years of missionary life for a needed rest, while Father GOURDON left Simpson to replace him at Liard. - A young French-Canadian Priest, Rev. Father Joseph TURCOTTE, travelling aboard the "Distributor" landed on the Island on September 11th of that year 1924. Aged 27, the Missionary had been ordained a Priest in Edmonton, where he completed his theological studies, and became then assistant to Father GOUY. - A young man, named Couture, arrived at the same time to serve as a Lay Brother. He was a skilled mechanic.

Father GOUY displayed his ability in various jobs by inaugurating the new harvester for cutting oats and wheat. It was he also who occasionally broke in the oxen and tamed them for work. The Missionary was also a musician playing the organ in the church.

RADIO SIGNAL STATION.

We should note that the Superior gave, in the fall, permission to the Government Department to erect a pylone on the Mission property bordering the Crown land. The other pylone stood on the latter for the purpose of sttinf up aerials in connection with the project of a Radio Signal Station being erected on that property. Since the permission was verbal only, the occupation by the Government of that portion of the Mission land, for the location of the said pylone, became in later years a matter of judicial controversy. Even to this day, lawyers find means to collect fees for their searches on this matter. Anyway the telegraphic service was inaugurated at the new Station in the summer 1925, and enabled the people of Simpson to send and receive messages to and from various Settlements in the Mackenzie and the Provinces. This air communication system was most valuable to the Hospital authorities who could then arrange for airplane flights when necessary. Government affairs, traders and trapper' business were also helped with the new communication facilities, so that the slow tempo of life in the community began to encrease a bit and gave more importance to the Island as the geographical center of the Mackenzie.

In the absence of Bishop BREYNAT who was ill, Father DUPORT of Fort Smith was vested with the authority of Administrator of the Vicariate and visited Simpson in the summer. He officiated at the solemn administration of the sacrament of Confirmation, an unusual function for a simple Priest. It was on July 16th. Freddy SIBBESTON was one of the seven who received then the Holy Spirit.

SUMMING UP FATHER GOUY'S WORK.

Father GOUY, Suprrior for the past six years, was called to assume another important function at Fort Smith. Under his

direction, the Mission which included the Hospital, the School and the Farm, passed through a period of intense organization. Horses and machines had replaced dogs and oxen for traction labour. A mower, cultivator and harvester reduced hand work and increased the yield of produce. Water pump, new roads, new cleared lands, new basements and fences were all improvements achieved during that period, which witnessed the immigration of 'outsiders', ...including pigs.

The moving of the Fathers' residence, the erection of a new church are to his credit, while the re-integration of a number of remiss parish-owners and the conversion of others are evidence of his zeal.

FATHER MOISAN APPOINTED SUPERIOR.

Father MOISAN, returning from Europe, was appointed Superior of the Mission. 45 years old, the Priest had ministered among the Slave Indians for 20 years. He had spent half of that time at Fort Simpson. Although his health was not too good, the Missionary was highly qualified for the task awaiting him. His first ministerial act was to officiate at the funerals of a 18-year old boy from Fort Good Hope on September 1st. Four days later he regenerated the soul on the one day old baby Theresa McGURRAN by the water of Baptism. Theresa married Ed. COOPER 18 years later.

An Assistant General of the Oblates, Rev. Father R.F. BELLE came from Rome the summer 1926 for an official visit. It was his second visit of this kind in the Mackenzie. Father ANTOINE had made the very first visit in 1895. Father BELLE arrived at Fort Simpson on July 18th aboard the "Distributor" and was accompanied by Bishop BREYNAT. The Delegate of the Mt. Rev. Father General expressed much satisfaction for the material and spiritual development of the Mission and gave the staff his encouragements for their apostolate. Father BELLE assured the Superior of all possible support from the Superior General of the Oblates.

For the past 10 years, the St. Margaret's Hospital had had only occasional services of a visiting physician. Doctor TRUESDELL, who arrived on August 25th of that year 1926, was the first resident Doctor in the Settlement. His professional responsibilities extended to the population of the neighbouring districts along the Mackenzie River.

Brother H. SARREAU, a young French-American from Manchester, who had come to Simpson the previous year, went to Edmonton that summer for dental care. The 21-year old Brother who had enjoyed his stay at the Sacred Heart Mission, was then transferred to another place. Brother Jean-Marie BEAUDET, after more than 10 years of service at this Mission, went down to Good Hope in August.

Earlier in the year, the Stations of the Cross had been erected in the church by Father MOISAN. - In the absence of a Religious Sister, to carry on the teaching at the St. Margaret's School, Father TURCOTTE assumed the function of teacher for part of the school term. Sister GAMACHE arrived in the summer to take charge of the school, a function she will occupy for 14 years.

BROTHER L. GOSSELIN ENTERS ON THE SCENE OF SIMPSON.

About at the same time, Brother L. GOSSELIN came to Simpson and replaced Brother SARREAUULT. The 20-year old man from Quebec may have not foreseen that he was inaugurating almost a quarter of a century work on the Island, marked with his strong physical and religious personality. His predecessors had contributed greatly to the erection and organization of the different units that formed the Sacred Heart Mission, but Brother GOSSELIN was to take a great part in their establishment and development.

The year 1927 passed without any striking events. We might note however that Father MICHEL came from Fort Providence to preach the annual retreat to the Oblates and Grey Nuns in February, travelling along with Jos. LAFFERTY. The Superior went back with them and preached the annual retreat to the two communities of Providence.

REVIVING THE FAITH.

We should note too that in the course of the year, Father MOISAN and his assistant Father TURCOTTE succeeded in reviving the faith and religious practices of their flock. They recorded large attendance at Mass and communions on feast days. On the Feast of Corpus Christi, adorators in large number alternated in the church throughout the day. On certain first Fridays of the month, several persons and children received Holy Communion. At Easter, all Catholics present in the Fort made their Easter duties. And on Christmas, the church was filled to capacity with Catholics and non-Catholics as well. Among other factors that may have accounted for this occasional revival, we might mention the profound and touching religious influence of the Pastor on his parishoners and the persuasive personality of his assistant who was proficient in the use of English both in public instruction and private conversation.

ADAPTING THE METHODS.

When we read the diary of both the Mission and Hospital, we can't help noticing that the life of the community was undergoing changes; that new ideas were altering the minds and habits of its resident and fluctuating population. It had become necessary, for instance, to adapt the methods of the pastoral ministry. In particular, the use of language in religious instruction should be more adapted to the language of those receiving it either in the church or privately and at school. Then Father TURCOTTE was the first Priest to make a wider and better use of the English language. Until then, Slavy and French were the usual languages spoken by the Pastor in the sermons, because they were the vernaculars of those attending Mass most regularly. However around 1925, when immigrants of Catholic Faith spoke English and with an increasing number of young people learning that language at school, its wider use became necessary.

PROBLEM OF LANDS.

The influx of immigrants on and around the Island raised the problems of requests by a number of them to occupy and purchase portions

of land owned by the Sacred Heart Mission. The first to secure a lease was Andy WITTINGTON in 1921. He was granted a lease of 3/4 acre on lot 21 for a period of 21 years at \$ 5.00 per year. Joseph VILLENEUVE was the next in 1927. His lease covered not quite 1/2 acre and for a period of 5 years renewable at will indefinitely. Both had occupied the land prior to the arrangements which legalized the existing situation.

The Radio Station was transferred from its original location to the present one on lot 5 owned by the H.B.C.. And the Indian Agency took over the land and buildings which Dr. TRUESDELL occupied in that summer 1927. Several other occupants of the Mission's land were granted lease in the course of the year. They were C. WITLOCK, John LAFLAIR, ROULLIER and McNEIL who were apportioned lots on the frontage covering an area of almost 1/2 acre. Those were not surveyed but delimited by mutual agreement. The following year, Isidore VILLENEUVE, G. WILSON and A. GEORGES were given the same deal. In later years other lots were leased under the same conditions to those who gave enough guaranty of responsibility. - However, in 1930, Andy WITTINGTON who had a grind against the Catholic Church, headed a petition requesting the Government to take compulsory means for the sale by the Mission of the land occupied by the lessers. No action was taken by the Government, because those portion of land were not individually surveyed. Moreover, the owner that had spent money and labour in clearing and breaking that land was entitled of priority of judgment in disposing of it. Further, other land was available on the Island and it required only good will and labour to make use of it.

There were 253 Catholics under the pastoral care of Father MOISAN and his assistant Father TURCOTTE in 1927, while 125 others belonged to different or no religious denominations. Brothers Louis BEAUDET, Médard LATREILLE and Léonide GOSSELIN were responsible for the temporal work and welfare of the Mission, the Hospital and School. The horses were relieving the oxen's work and the machines eased hand labour. During the summer, 8 tons of supplies were received for the maintenance of the Mission and its institutions. It was a record amount of freight which contrasted sharply with the few hundred pounds that were allowed to Father BROCHU at the beginning of the century. It contrasts more sharply with the 50 to 60 tons of freight imported by the Mission in recent years.

OTHER LEASES OF LAND.

The old timers will recall that prior to the establishment of the Hospital in 1916, the small population on the Island was centered around the Hudson's Bay Company, while the transient Indians and trappers pitched their tents amidst the trees and bushes of the "Flat". They and the employees of the Bay did not need or care to clear any sizeable piece of land for their own use present and future. In 1911 or 1912, Brother KE* RAUTRET cut the first trees on the property acquired by the Mission for the construction of the new Hospital. Ever since, the Mission's staff undertook and carried on the strenuous and costly job of clearing and breaking new land to insure the operation of its institutions. The nominal fee charged and not always collected for the portions leased must have appeared a fair dealing to the local citizens since 1928; there were 20 of them occupying the Mission land. To date the latest to make leases were Joseph VILLENEUVE, Junior,

WALKER, CARLSON, J. HARDISTY, H. BROWN, T. TRINDELL, P. McKEOWN, EPLER and THOMASSON. Thus, in 1928, the Mission authorities had made available to the local citizens a large strip of their land, while the other portion that had been cleared was used to full capacity for cultivation, grazing, parking...

There were some 300 more acres allotted to other concerns or crown land. It is significant of the lack of foresight of many, that acres of land in the Settlement were left bushed and treed, and that only a few odd residents took the means to make use of a few acres or to acquire possession of small portions for their present and future needs. Among them, there was Mr. J.J. GOODALL who arriving the same summer 1927 acquired a portion of la land for his family.

Following the transfer of the Radio Station on the H.B.C. land in 1927, there were 90 acres of land left to the Bay and only a few were cleared and put to use as it is today. The Anglican Church had then 43 acres bushed and treed, except a few that were put to use. On the "Flat" there were then some 50 acres of bushed and treed land that were reserved for the Treaty people who occupied only a small portion of it. True, there was plenty of space available on the Island besides that occupied and used by the Mission. And it was only when and after the Missionary had cleared his own property that claims to the best portion of it began to be thought of or applied for. Human foresight and steady labour are not the exclusive privilege of the Catholic Mission who practice them. It is field opened to all, and bringing fruits to the provident labourers.

SPIRITUAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE TASK OF THE SUPERIOR.

Father MOISAN was thus called to examine and study the problems arising from the claims made by immigrants and local citizens for the occupation of the Mission land. He prepared, discussed and completed arrangements for leases to those who made application. Perhaps his most unpleasant task was the collecting of fees on the lots allotted. It is apparent that the Superior had become a busy administrator in addition to his pastoral work with little time left for manual labour. The time had passed when the Priest could divide his occupation between the ministry and manual work. The Mission had gone through the period of construction and organization, under his predecessors. Father MOISAN was able then to center more on the spiritual and administrative activities. In the course of that year, 240 sermons and religious instructions were given by the two Priests. Two converts were received in the Church; but 37 members died of influenza and other sicknesses.

The third LATREILLE, Brother PHILIP, arrived at Simpson in the summer. At the age of 26 years, he could well compete with MEDARD in ability and hard work. So, with them and Brother GOSSELIN the farm and the material welfare of the whole Mission were in first class hands.

FIRST AIR MAIL SERVICE.

On January 26th 1929, Punch DICKENS inaugurated the first air mail service on the Island. The whole town hailed the event.

Father J. TURCOTTE was privileged to fly back from Providence, and Father MICHEL to return to his Mission later on towards the end of February. Commercial air transportation companies entered the district. During the next decade, they were among the chief factors in bringing Fort Simpson and the Mackenzie into the limelight.

This Mission took opportunity of easier and faster transportation for their pastoral visits and the hauling of extra supplies in special cases. The airplane did not put an end to the travels by dogs and canoes of the Missionaries of Fort Simpson. Father TURCOTTE, and others after him, continued to visit the scattered camps and Wrigley by dogs and canoes, when the service of the airplane were too costly or not available.

DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

The health of the Superior had deteriorated with the years. Spasms of epilepsy became more numerous under the strain of strenuous work. So, Father MOISAN asked to be relieved of his functions in 1929. He was then nearing 50 years. In March, the devoted lover of the Sacred Heart of Jesus renewed the intronisation of the Sacred Heart at the Mission and Hospital. He re-dedicated their personnel and their work to the Patron of the Mission. - The resinging Pastor was greatly consoled, on September 21st, in receiving into the Church the 65-year old JOE HOPE. His son JOHN was also received into the Church a month later by the new Pastor Father ROBIN who blessed his union to Adeline SIBBESTON.

FATHER ROBIN IN CHARGE.

Rev. Father ROBIN took office of Superior on August 18th, at the age of 42 years. For 17 years he had ministered at Good Hope among the Hare Indians. An efficient administrator, the Priest was soon placed in a position to display his abilities. The youthful Church of Father BROCHU had grown up with ups-and-downs since 1894. The institutions of the Mission, comprising the Sacred Heart Mission proper, the Hospital and the School, were fairly well established. Their increasing and more diversified activities required however administrative proficiency, pastoral firmness and assidual care. Father ROBIN possessed all those qualities, but he must have felt the burden of his new and heavy duties.

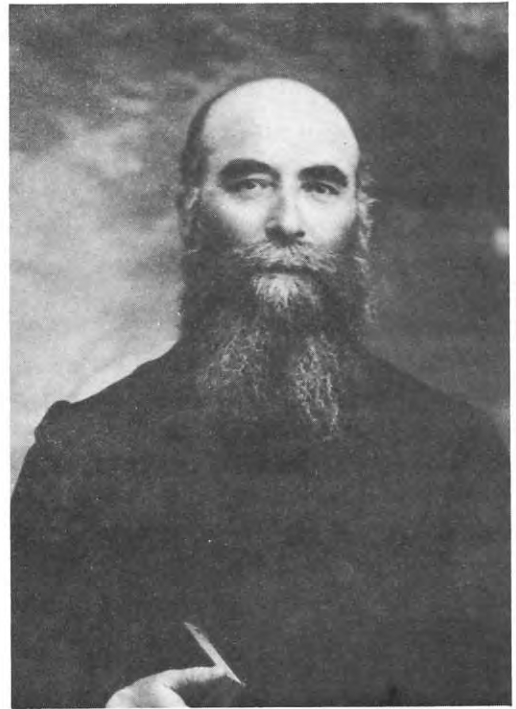
His first ministerial function was to bless the union of Theodore TRINDELL and Mary GAUDET on August 26th. The new chapel of the Father's residence having been completed, the Superior made its solemn blessing on September 29th. Under his direction, the Brothers built a laundry in the basement of the Hospital, making use of the lumbers taken from the old church that was pulled down. In the late fall, 3000 pounds of beef and 675 of hog meat were stored following a record butchery by the Brothers.

By that time, Brother Marc LEBORGNE who had been one of the first Oblate Coadjutor at the Sacred Heart Mission had been transferred to Fort Norman. Father J. TURCOTTE had gone to minister at Fort Liard. Father MOISAN remained assistant to Father ROBIN with the particular care of the spiritual welfare of the Hospital patients. The two communities joined with him for the celebration of the 25 years of his priesthood, on March 5th, 1930.

SUPERIORS OF THE MISSION



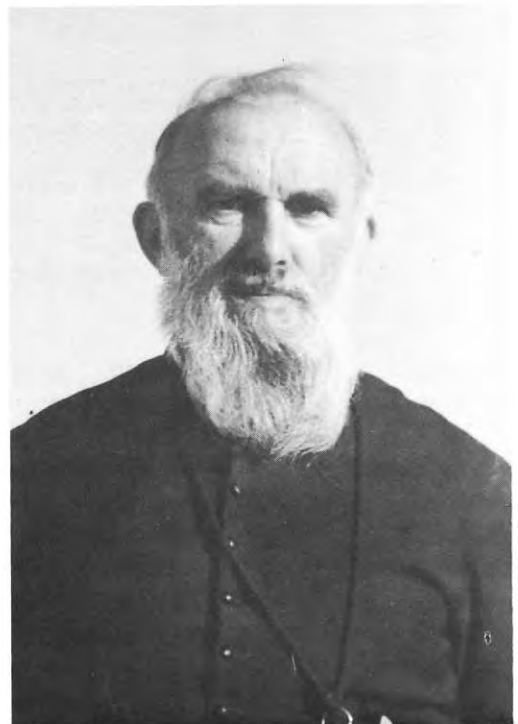
Rev. Father G. Andurand: 1911 - 1919



Rev. Father E. Gouy: 1919 - 1925



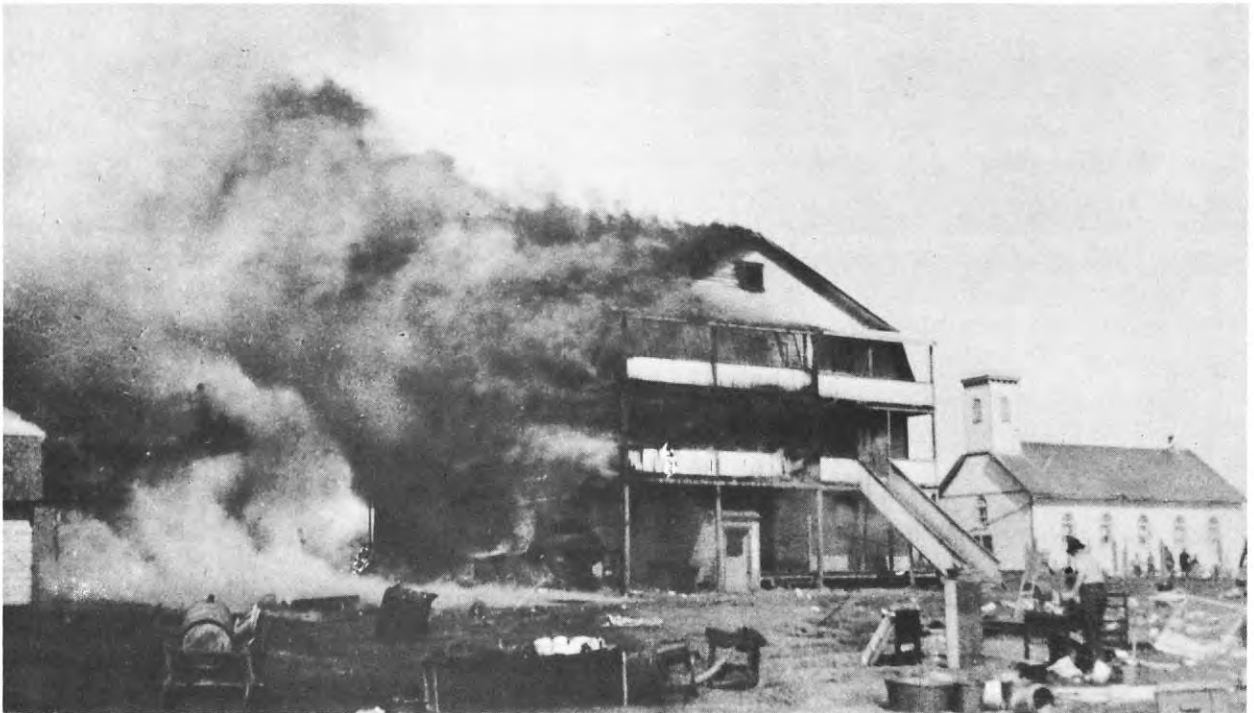
Rev. Father F. Moisan: 1925 - 1929



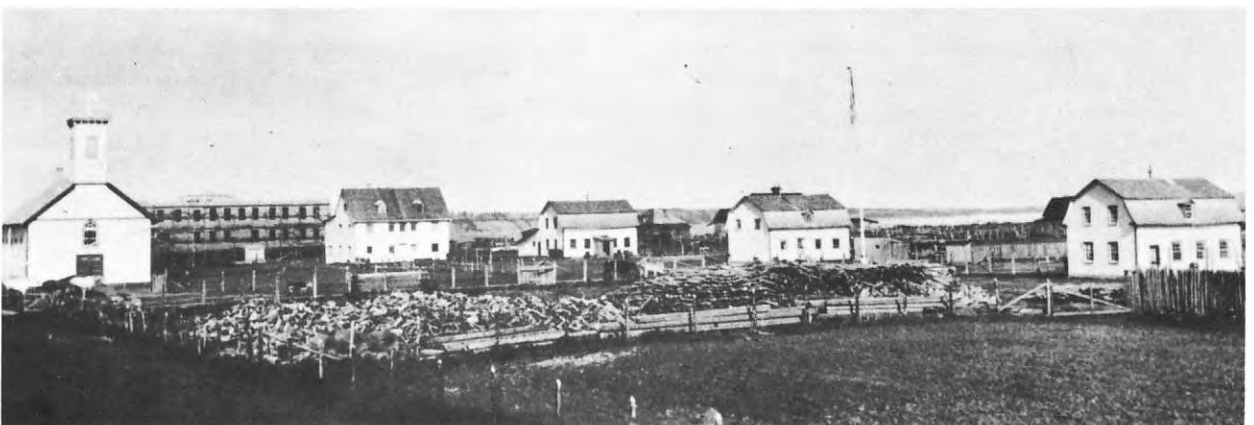
Rev. Father A. Robin: 1929 - 1935



Fathers' Residence—The Church—The St. Margaret's Hospital in 1925



St. Margaret's Hospital in fire on June 3rd, 1930



1931: Church— New Hospital—Fathers' Residence—Warehouse— Shop—St. Margaret's School

In that spring Father MOISAN whose devotion to the people of Simpson was increasing with the years, converted two adults. In May, the Superior preached a triduum to the Hospital girls and received two of them as "Children of Mary". The activities at the Mission, Hospital and School were proceeding then at full swing. Their personnel and employees were looking forward to a busy summer...

HOSPITAL COMPLETELY DESTROYED BY FIRE.

On June 3rd 1930, a sinister struck the Grey Nuns and the Oblates and the whole town when a fire started in the attic of the Hospital. When it was discovered at 11.00 a.m., the 16 patients were evacuated at once and carried to the Fathers' residence. The whole population hurried to save some of the furnitures, equipment, and supplies. But within less than two hours, the whole building had been burnt to the ground. There was no casualty, but the loss was almost total. The medicines, the goods in storage, 20 beds and 40 mattresses, 20 cords of wood, the Sisters' private belongings and the rest were destroyed. In reporting the sinister, the Superior stated that the event was heart-breaking and disastrous. The Oblate staff moved into the warehouse, while the Sisters occupied their residence with the patients. And the shop was turned into a kitchen for the service of them all.

IMMEDIATE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HOSPITAL.

Informed of the disaster, Bishop BREYNAT came by air 3 days later to consult with the Superiors and encourage the personnel. On June 8th, a petition was signed by the residents of the Settlement - only a few dissenting - to ask the Government the granting of money for the reconstruction of the Hospital. Bishop BREYNAT went to Ottawa and met the Hon. T.G. MURPHY, Minister of the Interior, who received him sympathetically. In the course of a long interview, they considered the problems created by the destruction of an institution that had serviced the district for 14 years. The years of fruitful labour and the large sum of monies should not be buried in the fumes of the first Hospital along the Mackenzie River. The Hon. Minister promised assistance, advised to make plans for the new building and to begin immediately the reconstruction. In the meantime, Bishop BREYNAT purchased from the Bay lot 12 formerly occupied by LAMSON. On July 10th, he came back to Simpson with the plans and gave his instructions for the project. On August 6th, the "Mackenzie River" unloaded 100,000 feet of lumber on the Island. Three weeks later, the Brothers began digging the basement at the new location. Mr. OUELLET, a skilled carpenter had come from Resolution to lead the work. Meanwhile, he built an addition of 12' by 37' to the Fathers' residence, for a better accomodation of the Sisters and their patients. Brother TESNIERE, also an expert in construction, followed Mr. OUELLET to speed up the foundations of the new 40' by 100' building. Bishop BREYNAT blessed the first 'stone' and the work went on until early October, when it was suspended for the rest of the winter.

FALL AND WINTER CHORES.

In the midst of those disturbances and unusual occupations, the operation of the Mission continued as usual. Brother GOSSELIN had

made his perpetual vows of religion on June 24th. He and Brother MEDARD busied on and around the farm with their cattle and in the fields. They cropped 630 sacs of potatoes and 80 of carrots. Cattles and pigs were butchered producing 2 tons of meat. and in the year, 6,300 eggs had been laid.

In early winter, Brother GOSSELIN built a porche to the shop serving as a temporary residence for the Fathers and Brothers. He made also interior accomodations and improvements against the worst cold. - The end of the year 1930 marked an important event for the Anglican Church, when their new church was dedicated on Christmas by Bishop GEDDESS.

FINISHING THE HOSPITAL.

In may of the following year, the work of reconstruction of the Hospital was resumed under the direction of Mr. OUELLET who came by canoe from Providence. Brother TESNIERE and M. HARNOIS, who had arrived with him on the 11th of may, put up the building, and on June 11th, they were ready to haul up a 1200 gal. water tank at its place on the roof. By that time Brother BRUYERE had joined the carpenters, so that in the middle of August, the heating, water and sewage systems were installed and the exterior completed. MM. OUELLET and HARNOIS went away then, while the Brothers carried on until the end of September. Earlier on the 4th, the Sisters and their patients occupied their new quarters. On October 2nd, the Superior celebrated the first Mass in the new chapel. It was the task of Brother TESNIERE to make the 'finishing', following the departure of Brother BRUYERE towards the end of October.

TO-AND-FRO MOTION AMONG THE BROTHERS.

In the meantime the Mission's staff had undergone some changes and was affected variedly. Brother Louis BEAUDET who had been one of the first Oblate Coadjutor at the Sacred Heart Mission in 1916, passed away at Aklavik on March 15th at the age of 74 years. - The 27-year old Brother Jos. LAVOIE came from Providence to assist Brother GOSSELIN in digging a new well near the main road in front of the Hospital. - Brother MEYER, an old timer who had served at Bear Lake and Fort Rae, gave valuable assistance until his departure for Arctic-Red-River in the course of the summer. - Brother PAINTER of Fort Smith was also made available for various jobs. Brother Médard LATREILLE returned from a holiday to resume his former functions. - His Brother PHILIPPE was transferred to Providence 3 months later.

BISHOP FALLAIZE RESIDING AT SIMPSON.

This year 1931 was also marked by the arrival at Simpson of a young Missionary, Father Alphonse FEUVRIER. Aged 26, the Priest spent 3 weeks at the Mission before proceeding to Fort Liard as assistant to Father TURCOTTE. In the fall Father MOISAN was called at Fort Providence, leaving alone the Superior until the arrival of the new consecrated Bishop Pierre FALLAIZE on the 6th of December. The coadjutor of the Vicar Apostolic was then 44 years old and had been a Missionary at Bear Lake and later on on the Coast among the Eskimos of Coppermine. The choice of Fort Simpson for the residence of the Coadjutor was motivated by the fact

that this Settlement was the geographical center of the Mackenzie and was served by regular air mail and transport services. His presence gave occasion to the celebration of Pontifical High Masses and enhanced the liturgical ceremonies, fostering the spiritual life of the community.

LOOKING FORWARD TO BETTER TIMES.

1931 had been a bustling year. Father ROBIN the Superior, was given ample opportunities to display his abilities and no doubt that he must have looked forward to better times both materially and spiritually at dawn of the new year. The Hospital had resumed its normal operation after the sinister. - The St. Margaret's School, moved to its new location, had a recorded registration of some 30 pupils with 3 of them in Grade 5. He had a staff and experienced Brothers discharging their various function with much efficiency. In addition to the day pupils, ten others were in attendance at the Providence Residential School. They were Jos. and G. VILLENEUVE, Johnny and Freddy TETSO, Antoine and Moise ANTOINE, etc...

The Catholic population numbered 229, representing 62% of the whole population of Simpson. Although the Pastor did not value the Christian Faith and the morals of his flock by their number, he estimated that most adults fulfilled the Easter duties and the youth grew up more instructed in the fundamentals of Christianity.

Compared to the year 1925, the Catholic population had decreased by 26 persons. It was mainly due to the large number of deaths caused by epidemics and a fluctuating immigration during that period. The analysis of the 1931 census shows that a number of employed girls and patient of the Hospital from other Settlement may have been included in the previous census. It is noticeable that the Treaty people formed the two-third of the population, exactly 242. Of that number, 161 were members of the Catholic Church, while the 81 others were counted as Anglicans and Protestants.

The personnel of the Mission at the opening of the new year 1932 consisted of 7 Oblates: Bishop FALLAIZE, Father A. ROBIN; Brothers H. TESNIERE, M. LATREILLE, J. LAVOIE, A PAINTER and L. GOSSELIN.

The poorest attendance at Mass on the 1st of January was recorded that year. Only 2 persons of Simpson were present to the celebration. - On the 8th, the Oblates and the Grey Nuns began their annual retreat that was preached by Bishop FALLAIZE. The closing service was marked by the perpetual vows of Brother TESNIERE on the 17th. - The Coadjutor flew to Providence the next day to preach the annual retreat there to the two communities. In May he inaugurated the month of Mary in giving an appropriate instruction on the prerogatives of the Blessed Mother. This he continued till the 23rd when he departed with Brother LAVOIE for Fort Norman. The Superior was left alone again for the ministry until the ailing Father LEGUEN arrived from Fort Nelson (?) on the 9th of September.

EXAMPLE OF AMBITION FOR THE YOUTH OF SIMPSON.

When the Pastor of the Mission christened the few-hours old baby Philip THOMSON on May 25th, he could not

have foreseen that one day Philip would be the first Simpsonian to become a University Graduate and instructor in the Royal Canadian Air Force. In his early youth, the boy attended the Fort Providence Residential School and thence went to St. John 's College directed by the Oblate Father in Edmonton. Bishop BREYNAT had thought and hoped for some years that Philip had a vocation for priesthood. However, his mentor and benefactor Father GILLES directed him to the profession of aviator. Mr. P. THOMSON is married and lives in Winnipeg, working at the Royal Canadian Air Force quarters.

The success reached by one of the Natives of Fort Simpson is a proof of his talent for higher studies and of his ambition to occupy a place of high responsibility in the society. His success is also a proof that boys of talent, be they Indians or Métis, may emerge from the primitive standard of life and reach a high degree of civilization. We regret to record that after 15 years of operation of the St. Margaret's School, none of its 125 Indian and Métis pupils had reached a Grade higher than 5. And among the many who attended the Fort Providence Residential School, only a few odd ones reached Grade 6. One main reason for such a low percentage of pupils who received a primary education, is the unwillingness of the children to make the necessary efforts, and that of their parents to make the sacrifices required for that purpose. In those years, there were pupils in Grade 8 at the St. Margaret's School, for instance in 1926, three HOOKER children were in Grade 8. Also Mary CAMSELL and Tad HARRIS: none of them however were native of Simpson. In that year 1932, Barbara SHERWOOD was in Grade 6, while Edna SIBBESTON had quit school in Grade 5 two years earlier.

ADVICES TO A PORTION OF THE FLOCK.

Father MOISAN who had known the people and life of Simpson for 12 years, either as assistant Pastor or Superior of the Sacred Heart Mission, had expressed the regret that the Métis particularly failed to take opportunity of the higher education made available to them. the Priest had a special affection for them whose fathers and forefathers were the first to embrace the Catholic Faith, and who became interpreters, guides and faithful companions of the Missionaries in their voyages. He and Father ROBIN had witnessed a deterioration of the morals of a small number of that portion of the flock. The small number of Catholics of Métis origin formed then the strong element of the youthful Church of Fort Simpson, as it did form the strong element of the Infant Church. The Baptism of Philip, who was one of them, must have rejoiced Father ROBIN on that 25th of May 1932, foreseeing that the increasing number of the Catholic Métis would eventually contribute to the development of the youthful Sacred Heart Church on the Island.

A glance in the future at this time reveals that the Pastors of the Sacred Heart Mission will be compelled to raise their voices against occasion of sins threatening the practice of temperance, chastity and conjugal fidelity among their own flock. Several judgments will be made by the Priests on a number of Catholic Métis and efforts will be displayed by the Pastors to foster the practice of those virtues among them, as well as to put an end to the arising cases of drunkenness, lust and adulteries.

IMPROVEMENTS AND MOVEMENTS.

On the farm, the Brothers cleared and broke new pieces of land. The crop was good in the fall. A record harvest of 295 sacs of oats was made. A wind-mill was put up for the operation of the water pump and the well was deepened by 7,1/2 feet. The first stable that had been built with boards of an old scow was torn down, while a new 16' by 40' poultry house was started.

At the Hospital, the number of patients averaged 18 during that period. Brother BRUYERE, returning from Aklavik in the fall, spent 10 weeks building more closets and drawers. A telephone line was connected with the Doctor's residence. In november, Sister AUBERTIN was victim of an accident in filling with wood the steam boiler: a function discharged by the Hospital staff in those days.

A report indicated that two wireless operators were despatched 'outside' on November 26th, because of their misconduct. And to end that year 1932, the Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission witnessed with sorrow that only a small group of his parishonnors were present at the celebration of the Mass on the anniversary of the birth of Our Lord Jesus-Christ.

1933 - A YEAR OF JUBILEE : 75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION.

The event passed almost unnoticed to the whole Catholic population of Fort Simpson. The Superior noted the event and celebrated the Sacrifice of the Mass of thanksgiving on the occasion.

We consider that 1933 marked the end of the era of the establishment of the Sacred Heart Mission. The organization of the three units: the Mission proper, the Hospital and the School was functioning fairly well. The operation and administration of those institutions had become stabilized and a matter of routine.

While the life and activities of the Sacred Heart Mission had hitherto been compared to that of a youth, then and thence they may be compared to those of an adolescent. The Catholic population, as a whole, began to show more consciousness but also more independence. The Pastors noticed a growing need of deeper Faith and religious instruction for the parishonnors. There was nothing new in that phenomenon. The spiritual life that does not develop gradually, withers and dies out. The same may be said of the Hospital activities. In 1933, the medical and nursing life of the St. Margaret's Hospital had reached a period of development. - And also at the St. Margaret's School, the teacher and her pupils showed a revigorated spirit that spelled development.

Thus Father ROBIN, stirred up in his zeal by the changing times, preached a 3-day retreat to the Hospital employees and school pupils. At the closing, four girls were received 'Children of Mary'. On the Feast of Corpus Christi, the Blessed Sacrament had been exposed to public adoration from the high Mass till the after-noon service. When Father J. TURCOTTE

arrived at Simpson in August to replace Father LEGUEN, he resumed the practice of alternative use of Slavy, English and French in religious instruction in Church and privately. As we noted earlier in 1925, the use of the English language had become more necessary with the incoming of English speaking Catholics and the spread of that language among the youth. In September, Father TURCOTTE received into the church a 20-year old Indian woman.

In June, the Sisters were privileged with the visit of their Rev. Superior General, Mother PICHE of Montreal. Such an event is of great importance in the life of Grey Muns. The superior authority inquires into the activities of the institution, gives appropriate directives for the betterment of the religious life and organization of the personnel.

The Coadjutor returned to Simpson that summer. Shortly after, he made a perilous trip to Liard, Nelson and François with Fathers TURCOTTE and FEUVRIER. Back at the Mission on August 3rd, Bishop FALLAIZE resumed his functions as previously and enhanced by his presence the liturgical ceremonies on Sundays and Feast of obligation.

Meanwhile, Brother GOSSELIN repainted the interior of the church. Later he cleared and broke another piece of land. Brother MEDARD, who had limited success in the brooding of eggs by the hens, thought of importing a brooding equipment. Eventually, the system proved to be much defective. However, 11,413 egges were laid in that year 1933. In his spare time, Father TURCOTTE went out cutting wood with the Brothers. The Superior busied also doing odd jobs in addition to his pastoral duties. With the advice of the personnel, Father ROBIN decided to discontinue the raising of pigs, because pork meat was not popular nor was it economical.

The end of the season had brought unusual activities on the Island. Discovery of gold in the Nahanni Region prompted local citizens to go out there and take claims in prevision of possible benefits. George SIBBESTON, Ted. TRINDELL and Jonas LAFFERTY tried their luck and returned by land on the 14th of October. They had walked 70 miles through the bush on their way back to Simpson. In December, TRINDELL, SIBBESTON and McGurran were flown out again by Wop May who took himself other claims that were to bring benefit to no one.

The year had begun with a record low assistance at Mass, but it ended with a large crowd taking part to the Christmas festivals. And this was significant of the versality of a portion of the Catholic population in the observance of the sundays and holidays of obligation. This fact and others indicate that the Catholic Church of Fort Simpson was in a transient stage of development. It has been said then, and I believe it true, that most of her members had a basic knowledge of the Catholic Faith, but were not authentic believers. Does it mean to say that the sons and daughters of the first Catholics of the Sacred Heart Mission possessed the baptismal character without its vital and spiritual reality called the life of Grace? To say that the Catholics of Father ROBIN were dead Christians is a final judgment reserved to God alone. But to say that most of them possessed an imperfect and partial spiritual life, is a judgment that their Pastor was justified to make in saying they were not authentic believers.

The Missionaries of that period had visible evidence that most baptized Catholics did not possess a deep and inner spiritual life, because not enough nourished with the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist. There is nothing amazing about this fact which is particular to every other Catholic community undergoing development. A fact of history that teaches the Pastors of souls the method of slow prudence in urging their young and adolescent flock to an unqualified participation to the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist. A fact of Church History that reveals the need of a wholly assimilation of the Christian Faith prior to the wholly and fruitful participation to the Sacrament of Love and Charity.

With those observations in mind, on the degree of perfection or charity of the Catholic community of Fort Simpson after three-quarter of a century of missionary work, we shall proceed to review the last quarter of the century of the Sacred Heart Mission. A quarter century marked with the unstable but growing development of adolescence. A period of more diversified and growing activities that requires separate study which will be treated in 3 chapters: the Mission proper, the Hospital and the School.

NUMBER OF BAPTISMS

made at three Catholic Missions founded at the same time on the Mackenzie River.

Years	Providence	Simpson	Good Hope
1858	35	45	-
1859	26	25	44
1860	24	30	70
1861	15	36	23
1862	21	24	43
1863	49	38	33
1864	59	26	38
1865	34	40	84
1866	7	5	56
1867	7	11	22
1868	22	19	19
1869	8	7	26
1870	12	16	39
1871	6	10	46
1872	12	9	34
1873	16	13	29
1874	18	19	23
1875	16	5	23
1876	17	7	36
1877	10	12	22
1878	18	-	11
1879	12	19	48
1880	11	4	19
1881	17	7	38
1882	19	4	16
1883	12	1	20
1884	9	10	21
1885	21	2	15
1886	6	9	19
1887	20	1	23
1888	15	13	16
1889	47	4	13
1890	8	5	7
1891	7	8	28
1892	21	4	12
1893	17	3	17
1894	18	3	19
1895	14	11	18
1896	6	1	16
1897	17	4	14
1898	21	4	13
1899	9	7	22
1900	15	8	27
1901	6	4	13
1902	12	3	25
1903	13	5	17
1904	13	3	19
1905	8	11	22
1906	7	2	15
1907	18	2	8
1908	9	11	18

Years	Providence	Simpson	Good Hope
1909	5	5	9
1910	7	8	15
1911	9	7	10
1912	8	10	13
1913	14	9	11
1914	9	10	13
1915	9	6	9
1916	4	8	12
1917	16	2	13
1918	8	8	11
1919	9	5	12
1920	7	11	16
1921	15	27	13
1922	17	17	22
1923	42	9	17
1924	20	15	13
1925	16	6	18
1926	22	11	21
1927	16	10	12
1928	15	15	17
1929	13	15	10
1930	18	9	21
1931	14	22	13
1932	17	15	12
1933	13	11	14
1934	17	12	19
1935	22	13	12
1936	13	11	17
1937	21	8	11
1938	16	13	15
1939	19	13	14
1940	18	11	15
1941	18	5	14
1942	17	15	18
1943	18	17	10
1944	16	14	12
1945	16	14	10
1946	16	20	13
1947	19	18	9
1948	14	17	17
1949	17	12	6
1950	11	23	11
1951	11	15	13
1952	15	18	7
1953	13	12	9
1954	17	18	9
1955	24	20	4
1956	12	13	10
1957	17	22	6

SUMMARY

Years	Providence	Simpson	Good Hope
From 1858 to 1860	85	100	114
1861 to 1865	178	164	221
1866 to 1870	56	58	162
1871 to 1875	68	56	155
1876 to 1880	68	42	136
1881 to 1885	77	24	110
1886 to 1890	96	32	78
1891 to 1895	77	29	84
1896 to 1900	68	24	92
1901 to 1905	52	26	96
1906 to 1910	46	28	65
1911 to 1915	49	42	56
1916 to 1920	44	34	64
1921 to 1925	110	74	83
1926 to 1930	84	60	81
1931 to 1935	83	73	70
1936 to 1940	87	56	72
1941 to 1945	85	65	64
1946 to 1950	77	90	56
1951 to 1955	80	83	42
1956 and 1957	29	35	16

NOTE:

* Although many children from other Settlements are born and baptized in Simpson, the figures are of Simpsonians only.

* These statistics show and prove the continued presence of the Priest among the population of these three Settlements during the past Century. - And that presence will never discontinue.

* These figures are taken from the Registers of Baptisms of the respective Missions.

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The references to letters, publications, registers, diaries and books used in this "Historical Sketch" are not repeated each time they have been used. They are noted once and shall satisfy the average reader more interested in the events than in their documentary sources. To the few earnest historians I should like to say that I shall be glad to make all my sources available to them by way of private correspondence.

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DEVELOPMENT

1933 - 1958

Chapter One : THE MISSION

The last quarter century of the Sacred Heart Mission should be of intense interest to the people of Simpson who have been the actors and observers of its various material and spiritual activities. Those activities comprise the work and labour of the Fathers and Brothers at and around the Mission. They comprise also, those of the Catholic population as members of the Church. This first chapter then reviews a brief history of the pastors and of their flock. (1)

The name "MISSION" commonly refers to the Fathers and Brothers and to their establishments, Yet the meaning of "Mission", extends further to include the persons evolving within the circle of a society whose common purpose is the attainment of happiness on earth and thereafter in Heaven. Thus understood, the "Mission" is the local community of Catholics. It is the basic unit of a larger community composed of other local Missions, similar to that of Fort Simpson, which are called the "Missions of the Mackenzie". While the local Mission is under the direction of a Superior and Pastor, the whole of the Missions is under the direction of a Bishop for Ecclesiastical affairs, and of a Provincial for religious matters, both acting for their spiritual welfare. Viewed in this light, the history of the Sacred Heart Mission and allied institutions takes its place, modest as it may be, in that of our country and Catholic world. We have viewed her birth and infancy nursed by itinerent priests as she grew up in trials and sorrows. Thence, we followed her being brought up slowly and painfully by resident Pastors temporarily restrained in their apostolic duties, but who set her youthful pace on the road to salvation. That was the ungrateful task of the Missionaries GROLLEE, GASCON, GROUARD and DEKERANGUE, BROCHU, VACHER ANDURAND, GOUY and MOISAN.

It will be the task no less onerous of the Missionaries ROBIN, FALLAIZE, GATHY, TURCOTTE etc,.., to step up the march of the Fort Simpson church, as it grew up in the age of adolescence. During the first 75 years of the Sacred Heart Mission, the rate of Baptisms among the Catholic population had been 2.3 per year. However, on account of births at the Hospital of children from other settlements, the rate of Baptisms had been 10 per year.

1934.

In 1934, Father A. ROBIN was the Superior who guided with stern resolve for 5 years the destinies of the Mission. Father LEGUEN had gone out for medical attention, and Bishop FALLAIZE had been called to other pastoral duties. Father J. TURCOTTE was the socius, while Brothers GOSSELIN, MEDARD and PAINTER completed the personnel of the Community.

On January 4th of that year 1934, Father TURCOTTE went by dogs to Providence for the annual retreat of the Oblates and Grey Nuns. On the way, two of his dogs had died, while two others got sick, so that the Priest returned by air to Simpson on the 3rd of February. A month later, he went by air to Providence to get his remaining dogs and bought two more from Albert LOUITIT to drive back home. In April, he was out again visiting Indian camps at Burnt Island and in June he flew out for a visit to his seriously ill father. Fathers GOUY and GOURDON came from their Missions in the summer for a month visit at this Mission. For the Superior, it was a busy time during which he gave religious instruction in the Slavy language to 15 children. At the same time, Brother GOSSELIN was busy building heavy racks for his new bob-sleighs intended to save time in hauling hay and wood. Father GOURDON who had sailed back and forth throughout the summer landed again on the Island on the 15th of October. Father FEUVRIER who had come from Liard failed to go up the rapids in the fall. However, he must have made it since he came from Liard to Simpson in early January 1935.

Bishop FALLAIZE had returned to the Sacred Heart Mission and then spent part of his time visiting the local population of the Settlement, accompanied by the Superior. After Christmas, he flew to Fort Providence, and by the end of January, he came back with Brother GOSSELIN who made the round trip by dogs for him. The Coadjutor was called again in Fort Smith in February for a 2-month stay and thence sailed in May to Fort Liard for a 3-week visit there. On the 2nd of August, Bishop FALLAIZE took leave of the Mission, boarding the "Guy". His destination was Fort Smith, for an unlimited time. To the casual observer, traveling of this sort may seem to be a pleasant pastime. Yet, they could not be so, when motivated by and limited strictly to pastoral duties or undertaken only for administrative and health purposes. Eventually, such was the case of Brother O. LESSARD, who travelled by air from Providence on January 11th, 1935 to get medical care at the St. Margaret's Hospital. Fortunately, after his health had improved, the Brother was given residence at the Sacred Heart Mission.

1935.

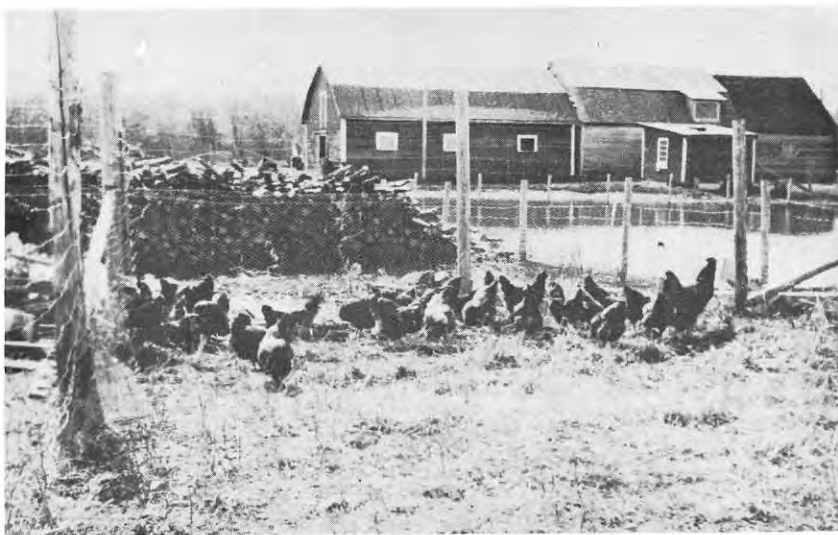
Father ROBIN was then worried about the behaviour of some of his parishioners. In early 1935, two events brought evidence that his earnest for his flock were timely. A 42-year old lady committed suicide by hanging on March 2nd. Her body was found dead along the road to the snye at 10 o'clock in the morning. She had become somewhat insane for the past months and was kept as a patient at the Hospital until the fatal accident. The sad fact about the suicide is that the woman had been much abused by a vicious trapper at Fort Norman during the previous years. No evidence had been given that the immoral influence of the depraved man had contributed to the psychological break-down of the woman. On the other hand, the factual knowledge of the circumstances of her life, indicates



Hôpital Ste-Marguerite — 1918



Frère Derrien Kérautret — 1912



Etable et Grange — 1925



Personnel de la Mission — 1930

that he had contributed to her delinquency and to the delinquency of her children. This fact makes an honest person sore to see and meet vicious characters of that sort who show no sign of conscientious discomfort. - The other event occurred on January 14th, when a number of persons including women got drunk and caused such trouble and fighting that the R.C.M.P. rounded up a dozen of them. They were jailed and fined, except the women who were let loose pending legal action, because they were under suspended sentences for similar abuses and disorder. The Pastor of those souls was then kept under grave apprehensions towards the maintenance of religious practices among his flock and of public morality in the Settlement.

More comforting events marked the year 1935 as the Superior General of the Oblate Order, Mt. Rev. T LABOURE arrived at Simpson on July 9 for his first visit. The event gave occasion to the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of priesthood of Father GOURDON and Brother J.M. BEAUDET. Twenty Oblates, including the two Bishops gathered on the 10th to pay their tribute of homage to the jubilarians. A High Mass of thanksgiving was celebrated with all the liturgical pomp possible in those years. Bishop BREYNAT announced then the appointment of Father A. GATHY as Superior of the Mission, in place of Father ROBIN designated to take charge of the Fort Providence Mission. Father TURCOTTE, who was to replace Father GATHY at Fort Norman, went down shortly after and made a tour to the Bear Lake Missions with him during the month of August. The 21-year old Brother LAPLANTE arrived on the 9th of July with the caravan to reinforce the personnel of the Mission. Father GOURDON returned to Providence on August 2nd aboard the "Guy" with 14 children for the Residential School. That was the second large group of children, sent to the Residential School by their parents, who understood better the growing need of education. Nine children only were in attendance at the St. Margaret's school, making a total of some 23 Catholic children receiving education in 1935-36, while more than twice that number did not go to school at all.

Father GATHY arrived on September 5th to assume his new functions with the assistance of Father GOUY and a new priest from Belgium who landed on the Island a few weeks later. Father J. DESSY 26 years old, and fresh from the theological studies and training. Endowed with a musical talent and favoured with a taste for art, the young missionary would soon have an opportunity to display his earnest zeal in the various activities of the Mission. - Father GATHY had come North in 1929 and for 6 years discharged missionary duties at and around Fort Norman. But prior to his call for missionary life, he served as curate for 10 years in the diocese of Namur, Belgium. A musician of good taste, the new Superior took the opportunity of the celebration of the feast of St. Cecile to renovate the Gregorian chant. On Christmas he replaced the profane "Minuit Chrétien" song by the liturgical "Come All Ye Faithful" during the midnight Mass. In early December, the pastor visited a camp at the foot of the rapids on the Liard where a 19-year old youth and his mother were ill. He said Mass for them during which they made their first communion. On the 14th, he blessed the marriage of ETATSA. On his way back, he said Mass at the 4-mile camp the next day, in the Policeman's tent. Thence William BETTALE accompanied the priest to town. In the evening, Father GATHY gave him religious instruction in preparation for first communion on the 16th. The 17-year old boy returned immediately to his camp with a load of food and supplies provided by the Indian Agency, as relief for the hard stricken family. The mother Marie DEZONI died on Christmas day and her son passed away shortly after.

1936.

New Year's day 1936 brought a full church at Mass in the morning, but it also witnessed a few drunks in the evening. This kind of behaviour has been going on for many years among the local population. A portion of Catholics publicly worshipped God first in the morning and ended the day in breaking His Commandments scandalously. - Father DESSY made his first pastoral visit on Jan. 15 at the Rabbit-Skin-River camp, and was accompanied by Brother GOSSELIN driving the dogs. In February, the Superior and the same Brother started for Fort Providence by dog teams but turned back at Jean-Marie-River, on account of the poor condition of some of their dogs. Shortly after, both went by air to Providence and returned ^{by} the same way at the end of the month. In the meantime, the young Father DESSY had made four visits at the 4-mile houses to give religious instruction and teach the prayers to a number of persons and children at the camp.

In those days, the Brothers had to improvise as experts in many tasks on the farm. Brother Médard LATREILLE, according to the reports, performed a veterinary operation in January of that year. The scene has been called 'epic' and the job a 'success'. Scenes of drunkenness appeared to have increased in the spring, since a number of citizens, including women, were put into jail. A number of white people were involved in the cases. - Conscious of his functions of guardian of christian morality, Father GATHY who was a man of no half-measures warned his parishioners against the abuse of intoxicating liquors, on Sunday August 30. Scandalous disorder and drinking occurred again the next evening, while a public dance was being held at the Hudson's Bay Company Community Hall. Then the priest went to all responsible authorities in the settlement and suggested preventive measures to avoid public disorder against Christian morality. All agreed to and promised the followings: 1.- No intoxicating liquors shall be taken at the dance hall. 2.- All those granted a permit for liquor shall not drink any in public, and in public places. - Thus, for a while peace had been restored to the community.

Brother Médard LATREILLE bid farewell to Simpson on the 19th of September, being transferred to Fort Providence, after 15 years of devoted services at this Mission. He had worked under the direction of three Superiors during the period of organization and later on under the regime of new machines and modern equipment. Horses were the main power still in 1936. - In early summer, Freddie SIBBESTON came down from Fort Nelson with 5 new horses.

In early October Father GATHY and Brother LESSARD sailed to Fort Providence for a triduum to the pupils of the Residential School. Both returned to Simpson aboard the "Providence" on the 20th of October with a load of fishes, amidst storms and other troubles. The priest and the Brother seem to have paired very well in those days. Skilled trappers and hunters (at least by fame) they competed in cleaning up the yards from roving foxes who had become friendly with the dogs and pigs. Incidentally, all the pigs were butchered on November 16. The reasons: first, because the net profit was not worth the expenses; and next, because the pig sty was falling into ruin.

During that year, the church bells tolled 15 times for the funerals of adults, who passed away in their prime. Amongst them was Mary GAUDET, at the age of 34 years, first wife of Theodore TRINDELL. Two small children had died also.

However, the Pastor blessed 6 marriages, all of them concerned with the conversion of one partner or reintegration in the Church. The Christmas festivals brought also much satisfaction to the missionaries when the church was overcrowded for the Midnight Mass and the school packed for the concert and lively party by the children.

1937.

In early 1937, Father GATHY performed the marriage of C. HANSEN to Edna SIBBESTON. In the course of the summer, two more were blessed. On the other hand the Pastors were called 12 times to conduct funerals, but only 9 times to confer Baptism. Father F. LECOAT administered his first on October 6th for the regeneration of baby Winnifried VILLENEUVE. The new priest had arrived in Simpson during the summer only for a few months stay at the Mission. His last function was to administer the Sacrament of Extreme-Unction on Christmas day.

By that time, the Superior had gone to Belgium for a well-deserved vacation and again Father HOUSSAIS came to assist the personnel. Father DESSY had been transferred to Fort Liard then, but Bishop FALLAIZE had returned on December 16th to assume the functions of Superior of the Sacred Heart Mission.

1937 was marked by the installation of a power plant for supplying electricity at the Hospital, the Mission and other buildings. It started operation in September, bringing a considerable improvement in lighting conditions and also in providing power for utility services. - The farm had provided only one ton of meat that fall and Father HOUSSAIS had bought 3000 fishes. As the food supplies were short for the needs of the increasing number of patients, a load of meat was hauled from Sibbeston Lake by Louis BISSON, piloting the Mission's plane. - Cutting and sawing cord wood appeared to have been a needed exercise performed by Fathers FEUVRIER and LECOAT who did well on the job in the late fall. Father HOUSSAIS too, in want of physical training, did well with Brother GOSSELIN as they completed the work of the veranda at the South end of the Hospital.

1938.

A Pontifical High Mass opened the new year 1938. Bishop FALLAIZE performed the liturgical ceremony rather rare at most Missions. Sadly enough, many Catholics were absent, remarked Father HOUSSAIS. The Bishop erected new stations of the Cross in the Mission's chapel later in January. He preached the annual retreat to the Oblates and Grey Nuns in February, and on the 27th, he honored baby Florence HARDISTY by conferring on her the Sacrament of Baptism. The pupils of the St. Margaret's School were honored by his visit in March during which a test brought to evidence their knowledge and ability. During the Holy Week, the Coadjutor presided at the ceremonies with the rites reserved to a Bishop. The month of May brought the news of his recall to Fort Smith, and on the first of June, Bishop FALLAIZE went by air to the Episcopal City, ending then his residence at Fort Simpson. - After open water, Father FEUVRIER travelled up and down the Mackenzie, performing pastoral duties at various camps, particularly at Fort Wrigley. - Father GATHY returned from Belgium on July 12 revigorated and inspired with new zeal. The pastor soon observed a fair attendance at the Sunday Mass, but at the same time, he deplored drinking parties occasioned by dances and causing

fight, cries, yells and orgies. The priest thundered on the following Sunday against such disorder offending Christian morality and social peace. On Monday and the following days, a number of offenders apologized to their pastor and promised amendment. Eager to improve the spiritual welfare of his flock, Father GATHY preached a retreat to the ladies. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception he established for them the Society of Notre-Dame. One of the Hospital Sisters was given the direction of the group due to meet once a week. Meetings were held from time to time with some benefit until the Superior growing ill was compelled to leave Fort Simpson.

The ringing of the church bell to announce a ceremony of Baptism is mentioned for the first time in April of that year when Laura VILLENEUVE was christened. (2) Uncle Patrice was the godfather, who paid the one dollar fee for the privilege, a usual practice in organized Catholic communities. - Armistice day brought to church for the celebration most people of the town. Singing was performed by a group of men including those of the R.C.M.P. and of the R. C.S.C., while the Superior delivered a befitting address.

All was not going well however, between the Pastor and a few characters of the town. In December, the Magistrate was faced one day by the priest and certain characters. The latter who have been brought to court may remember yet the dishonor that covered their guilty and proud heads. However there were bright days in the life of the priest, who brought two adults into the Church in those months. - On the farm, the Brothers cleared more land to increase the much needed acreage for oats, hay and grazing fields. In his spare time, Brother GOSSELIN cut and squared over 100 logs for building a new stable. - For the rest of the year, the diary of the Mission has not recorded anything of much importance in the operation and maintenance of the establishment.

1 9 3 9 .

The annual retreat of the Oblates and Grey Nuns marks the beginning of every year. In 1939, it was preached by the Superior who went to Providence in March for the same purpose. In April, he travelled to Jean-Marie-River where he gave religious instruction to a small group of Indians. One asked to be received into the Church and a baby was conferred the Sacrament of Baptism. In the meantime, Father FEUVRIER continued his long journeys and hard travels along the Mackenzie River and down to Fort Wrigley, sowing the good seed. "Others," he said, "shall harvest the good crop in later years."

An unusual event marked that summer of 1939, when the Apostolic Delegate, Mgr. ANTONIUTTI visited Fort Simpson. The representative of the Holy Father in Canada addressed the Catholic population gathered in the church on July 28th, while Father FEUVRIER translated the address in the Slavy language. The Delegate administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 15 children and adults.

1 9 4 0 .

The Mission and Hospital personnel was favored with the prolonged visit of Bishop Breynat, in February 1940, who preached that year the annual retreat. Fathers DESSY and LECOAT came from Fort Liard for the occasion. Perhaps the Divine Office was recited then in common for the first time by the Fathers during the

retreat. The practice has been continued since then. Father GATHY, who had been ill for the past months, could not well attend to all his functions. Father A. FEUVRIER, a young priest, anxious to overspend himself in the functions of both pastor of souls and administrator, shared the responsibilities with the Superior. Father MOISAN was called from Hay River, however, to assume the function of Bur-sar in place of Father FEUVRIER on July 19. By that time, Father VACHER of Fort Liard had recovered from his illness and returned to his Mission.

From time to time, Father MOISAN acted as Superior while Father GATHY needed rest at the Hospital. A meticulous administrator and recorder of the least events, Father MOISAN had noted in 1940 a crop of 150 sacks of potatoes and 28 of wheat. He observed that the Indian Agency had cropped only 50 and 10 sacks respectively. In those years the cost of maintenance and operation of the Mission and Hospital had reached \$ 5,000.00, plus an equal amount in payment of salaries and for transportation costs. The restrictions imposed by the World War impelled the Missionaries to rely more than before on local resources. Brothers GOSSELIN and LAPLANTE found in this situation an incitive to increase the raising of live-stock and the cultivation of their fields. In the fall, they butchered 4 cattle which provided one ton of beef.

1 9 4 1 .

The New Year brought the newly consecrated Bishop J.M. TROCELLIER for the annual retreat on January 18th. He prolonged his visit until the 8th of February.

The Pastors of the Mission had observed for some time that most Indians living out in the bush were coming to town mainly, if not exclusively, for business and entertainment purposes. They then returned to their camps without receiving the Sacraments and attending religious services. Moreover, thier visits to the priest were motivated mainly by temporal and material interests. On that account, Father MOISAN made the remark that it had thence become more imperative for the Missionaries to sacrifice themselves in the service of God. His remark was in sharp contrast with his observations that a large group of Indians from Fort Rae and Bear Lake visiting Simpson in mid-March had all received Holy Communion. There were 15 men who had come by dogteams.

Brether O. LESSARD, who had been confined at the Hospital for some time, grew worse and was administered the Sacrament of Extreme-Uncion on May 4th. The health of the Superior was not improved either. So both went to Edmonton in early July for medical care at the General Hospital. Unfortunately, this was the end of Father GATHY at Fort Simpson after 6 years of devoted labour as head of the Mission. He was 46 years old then and was to continue his apostolate at Yellowknife until 1952, when he was appointed Chaplain of the Air Force at Goose Bay, Labrador. All duties fell then on Father FEUVRIER who conducted a week retreat for the Indians during the summer. And on July 14th, he went down to Wrigley on the Mission's Boat for the same purpose.

July 13th was a day of jubilation at the St. Margaret's Hospital, that celebrated the 25 years of its foundation. Bishop TROCELLIER officiated at the Pontifical High Mass of thanksgivings, and spoke of the gratitude due to God for the benefits granted the institution during those years. He reminded the people

of Simpson of their duties of gratitude towards the Hospital personnel and urged them to pray for continued blessings. Incidentally, I take much satisfaction at the thought of having been present at the ceremony then, as a visitor, and I look forward to the Golden Jubilee in 1966, with the hope of joining again with the population of Simpson for the celebration.

The new Superior, Father Jos. TURCOTTE arrived three weeks later, on Aug. 2nd, on the Distributor to assume his functions. He was 44 years old and had 17 years of service in the Mackenzie. His first 11 years were spent among the Slave Indians of Simpson and Liard. He was assisted by Fathers MOISAN and FEUVRIER.

All three Fathers were proficient in the Slavy language, while the Superior had the advantage of being proficient also in the English language. Peculiarly enough, the new Pastor made his first sermon in French on August 3rd. Evidently, the largest group of persons at Mass was the Brothers, Sisters and others who understood that language, while most Indians were out in the bush then, and only a few natives were in attendance at church.

As I draw attention to the use of languages in the church, I deem it timely to recall a few principles in this matter. The mind and practice of the Catholic Church in instructing her members and in the ministry, is to make use of the vernacular languages. The reason need not be explained, except to say that the evangelization in one own's tongue is a prior right to every people, even though they may understand another language more universally used in their midst. On the other hand, if and when more than one vernacular language is used by the members of the same Mission or church, then the mind and practice of the Catholic Church is to use all of them, in all that pertains to religion. Such are: religious instructions, Catechism lessons, prayers and hymns, the administration of certain Sacraments or part of them. However, it is a matter of common sense, that alternative use of the vernacular languages be directed by the number of the respective group in attendance at religious instructions or services. Again, alternative use may be during the same service or consecutively. For instance, if and when Slave Indians form 2/3 of the attendance at Mass on Sunday for a period of months or years, a fair number of instructions should be made in Slavy language on the same Sunday or on alternative Sundays. The census of the Catholic population in those years shows that the local majority was of mixed and French origin. It shows also, that those whose vernacular language was English, were in a very small proportion, even though that language was in use occasionally by a portion of people of the other languages. All those factors had to be taken in consideration by the Missionaries in the pastoral duties. They did alternate the Slavy and French languages, when those languages were locally in predominance.

In the early 40's, with the immigration of whites and an increase in the learning of English by the local people, it became imperative to give a large place to the latter in the pastoral functions. Therefore, Father TURCOTTE gave his second sermon in English, while Father FEUVRIER spoke in Slavy on the following Sunday. Accurate information on the use of the vernacular languages by the pastors are not available to justify the affirmation that they have always and at all times respected the mind and the practice of their Church in that matter. There is enough, however, to believe that generally speaking, they have made use

of the alternative method in proportion to the local population. In the early century of the Mission, emphasis had been placed on the use of Slavy and French because it was then the language of the predominant Catholic population. In the late century, emphasis has been placed on English and Slavy, because they had become gradually the language of the then predominant population, or at least predominantly in use locally by Catholics who took religious instruction or attended religious services. While the French language has been relegated today to the last place by the pastors, it should be borne in mind that at the beginning and long after the foundation of the Sacred Heart Mission, the nucleus of the infant church was formed of members of French descent and mixed blood. So were the BEAULIEU, MARCELLAIS, ROBILLARDS, LAVIOLETTES, HOULES at the time of Fathers GROLLIER, GASCON and GROUARD. Thence the GAUDET, LEPINE, VILLENEUVES and others at the time of Fathers DEKERANGUE, BROCHU and VACHER. Later on the LAFFERTY, LAMOUREUX, PERRAULTS and others. They were those who helped the priests in the learning of Slavy and writing of dictionaries, grammar, prayer book, catechism, hymnal book and the Holy Bible. They and their pastors contributed in this manner to the preservation of the Indian tongue. As the English language is taking an increasing importance in the religious instructions and services on the Island during that decade, it should not be overlooked that the Pastors of the Sacred Heart Mission maintained the alternative use of the vernacular languages in proportion of the respective groups of the local Catholic population, that sought religious instructions and attended religious services. In fact, the Church does not and should not make anything to hasten the disparition of the Indian language, and any other vernacular language of any of her members.

In the course of 1941, Father FEUVRIER visited all the camps along the Mackenzie River between Wrigley and Troub River, those up the Liard River and also the families across Simpson, particularly the MODESTES who remember yet his many pastoral visits in December of that year. At the Mission, Father TURCOTTE being acquainted with the administrative functions, preached the monthly retreats. And in addition to the pastoral duties, he gave a hand to the Brothers in various manual labours. On September first, he does a share in the thrashing of 176 sacks of oats and 13 of wheat. He fixes the playground for the children and paints their school. In November, the Superior helps Brother CLAEYS cutting ice on the snye. Brother C. CLAEYS, a native of Belgium, had come to Simpson in August and was given the task of cutting the supplies of wood and also other functions on the farm as well as in the operation of the Mission's institutions. The 39-year old Brother who had a very good education had been in the North for 11 years, spent mostly on the coast. Brother GOSSELIN was then charged with the care of machines, electric plant, refrigerators, etc. - Brother LAPLANTE had the care of the livestock and 50 hens. From October of that year 1941, he sat down milking the cows to relieve the Sisters of that job, on account of the exacting work at the Hospital.

1942.

In the early year 1942, the Superior made attempts to revive the liturgical chant in the church. He moved the organ from the tribune to the nave, and gave the school children a larger part in singing at Mass and Benedictions. Others joined in, and on February 1st, for instance, a solo was sung by the 24-year old Marie-Rose LAFFERTY at the Sunday Mass. The remark was made in April

that the chant was 'very good' under the direction of Sister LAPALME. The pastor had then introduced the "Stations of the Cross" during Lent and inaugurated the "Holy Hour" on the eve of the First Friday of the month. (3)

Two eminent visitors came to Simpson that year 1942. Rev. Father A. DES-NOYER, delegate of the Rev. Father General, and Rev. Mother GALLANT, Superior General of the Grey Nuns, arrived on June 27th, aboard the Mission's Boat. They were accompanied by Bishops BREYNAT and TROCELLIER. Their visit was marked by the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of priesthood of the Vicar Apostolic Bishop Breynat.

In the summer, two venerable missionaries bid farewell to their Mission. Father VACHER, whose health had not improved since the month of June, was forced to leave for Fort Smith on July 15th and thence went to Edmonton where he died, at the age of 73 years, in the 25th of August. A former Superior of the Sacred Heart Mission from 1903 to 1911, Father VACHER had at different times worked at Fort Simpson for some years. - Father MOISAN was called at Fort Providence in October to replace the Superior, Father J.L. MICHEL. His leave made it necessary to discontinue the 8 o'clock Mass on Sunday, and brought Father FEUVRIER back in his function of bursar. -

Brother LAPLANTE reported that year the production of 600 lbs of butter from the milk of his 7 cows. They had given an average of 10 gallons of milk in the summer months, and 6 in the winter. The 50 hens laid 20 eggs per day in April. Brother CLAEYS made a wood roller for the sowed fields and assisted Brother GOSSELIN in building a 2-wheel trailer. When he departed for Aklavik on June 29th, he could boast of the 150 cords of wood and 350 loads of lumber lying in the Mission's yard, as well as of the 350 cords of wood piled at the wood camp. Brother LESSARD, who had just returned from Edmonton, took charge of the electric power plant then, and was busy making cupboards, drawers and other wood-working chores.

Complaints were made by the local citizens during the summer that the cows and horses were doing damage to their property. The Superior then with the advice of his staff decided to butcher a number of cattle and fence the others. The massacre was carried out on the 18th of October. The remaining 9 cattle and the 5 horses had henceforth to be satisfied to graze and skip in their own fields.

1943.

An innovation had been introduced in 1943, when a priest from 'outside' came to preach the annual retreat to the Oblates and Grey Nuns. Father E. NANEAU of Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Québec, arrived at Simpson on February 12. Father FEUVRIER drove him by dogs from the airport. Besides being a preacher, Father NANEAU was a writer of books and a prolific song composer. His stay at the Mission was then a comforting and pleasant event for both communities, and also for the people of Simpson who have met him. Father LECOAT had come for the retreat, but missed it as he arrived too late. Travelling by dogs along the newly built American road, the Fort Liard Missionary failed to see Father NANEAU at the airport on the 27th, as he awaited there to take off.

A former Superior of the Sacred Heart Mission died at Fort Smith on March 10th of that year. A solemn Requiem Mass for the repose of his soul was celebrated in the church and attended by a large crowd. Father GOUY had been a very active worker and well loved priest during the period of the organization of the Mission. The church built under his direction in 1923 remains as a memorial of his devoted services to the people of Fort Simpson.

The Superior, Father TURCOTTE, who appears to be unafraid of changes in the interests of the Mission and of his flock, introduced slight innovations in the religious services during the month of May. The litanies of the Blessed Virgin Mary were said instead of the customary spiritual reading. The prayers were said in Slavay every day, while French and English were used alternatively. In May also was initiated the taking of the collection at Mass on Sunday: a practice continued ever since. It had been occasioned by the presence at Mass of a number of American soldiers of the U.S.A. army, stationed at Fort Simpson since the previous fall.

The wedding bell tolled for Baptiste GAZON and Alphonsine MERCREDI who married in the Sister's Chapel on Sunday June 6th. It was a double ceremony, since David MICHEL wedded Marguerite ANTOINE at the same time. A High Mass was sung for the newly weds. - The tolling bell called that year also for the funerals of many parishioners. Twenty-three of them had died of influenza that spread everywhere. The LAFFERTYS, GAZONS and MCGURRANS were most afflicted. The Superior and Father FEUVRIER overspent themselves over the spiritual care of the sick, the dying and the dead. However, when the flu quieted down, the Pastors observed with sorrow a resurgent brewing and drinking among their flock. It was such on the last day of the year, that no Indian was fit or available for Mass on New Year's day. The priest must have recalled then the words spoken by Father MOISAN when his people offended the Christian laws: "Let us sacrifice ourselves for them, by serving God better."

There was something new on the farm during 1943. Brother GOSSELIN received his first horse-drawn cultivator and Brother LESSARD put in operation the first large refrigerator. An Allis-Chalmers farm tractor was bought from Mr. C. HANSEN. The machines replaced two horses, one shipped to Fort Smith and the other to Fort Providence, because of shortage of feed. Father TURCOTTE acquired also a boat which was called "Ducot". He served as captain and engineer for boat rides to the personnel of the Hospital and school children. In October, the Superior put into operation one of his pet projects: namely the installation of a siphon system for disposal of the sewage water into the Mackenzie River. We learn again from the diary that Brother LESSARD was kept busy then with his pet job of building more and more cupboards and drawers. With the coming of the Christmas holidays, came the annual concert at the school. The pupils were given a test by Dr. TRUESDELL acting as chairman for the event and who congratulated Sister SARASIN for their progress. However, the Superior remarked that, unfortunately, a few children had missed school more often than their turn, causing much harm to themselves and to the whole class. - Father TURCOTTE was alone then for the pastoral duties at Christmas, Father FEUVRIER being at Fort Wrigley. He noted in the diary the beneficial influence of a Catholic manager at the Bay and of his family, as he observed their good exemplary life.

1944.

Another priest from Québec, Father R. LAFLEUR, preached the annual retreat in early 1944. He had been acting temporarily as Bursar of all the Mission in the Mackenzie for the past two years. Bishops BREMNAT and TROCELLIER paid their annual visit in July. It was the last official function performed at Fort Simpson by the Vicar Apostolic of Mackenzie, who resigned in favour of his Coadjutor and returned to his native France for retirement.

Farm expert, Mr. F.V. HUTTON, visited our farm in July, while Dr. A. LEAHEY tested the soil strata of the Island. Dr. A. MOORE inspected the St. Margaret's School and investigated the educational conditions in the Settlement. Dr. WHERRETT inspected the St. Margaret's Hospital. Both expressed their satisfaction and thanks for the cordial reception. In August, Capt. SEPPALA inspected the Radio Signals while Mr. HOLMAN, Superintendent of the Forestry Department was busy with his professional affairs. All inspections, surveys and tests were only preparatory work for the next year, in view of further research and projects in and around the Settlement.

Brother LAPLANTE sailed aboard the Sant'Anna on July 17th for a vacation in Québec. Father BEZANNIER, who had been ill at Fort Liard for some time, came to the St. Margaret's Hospital on September 23rd in quest of medical relief and to assist the lone Superior. Incidentally, Father TURCOTTE was worried about his flock: Only three persons were present at Mass on Sunday June 3rd; at Christmas, very few people came for the feast; he had buried 17 parishioners during the year. In reading the diary of the Sacred Heart Mission, one can't help bear in mind the plaintive words of the Lord over the city of Jerusalem, saying: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, but you would not." (4)

1945;

The year 1945 opened under rather sad auspices as a tea-party was held for the people at the H.B.C. during the celebration of the New Year's Mass. The practice showed little respect by Catholics for a feast of obligation and by business men lacking sense of duty towards their customers.

However, normal life continued at the Mission. On January 7, the Oblates and Grey Nuns went in retreat preached by Father DELALANDE, missionary at Copermine. On the 25th, Father FEUVRIER put on his snowshoes for a 3-week visit at Wrigley. In April, he rode to the Head-of-the-line for a 10-day trip. After the open water, the roving missionary sailed down again to Wrigley. He was back in July to replace Father BEZANNIER in the teaching of a group of children for their first communion. Father BEZANNIER was then in charge of the spiritual care of the Hospital patients. The priest who made occasional visits to the local families had remarked that his charitable advices to a number of them neglecting gravely their Christian duties, were fruitless and of no avail. In other fields, Father BEZANNIER has made himself a reputation in snaring rabbits, whose meat delighted the Hospital patients. In need of physical exercise, the aging priest enjoyed working occasionally with the Brothers. The Superior, too, took time off for ploughing, ~~digging~~ and sowing the fields. In April of that year, Brothers GOSSELIN and LESSARD deepened the Hospital water well by 5 feet to insure the increasing need of the services. Brother GOSSELIN was the victim of an accident

that caused serious inflammation to the eyes and forced him to leave for Edmonton on the 13th of May. Brother LESSARD was then left alone with the faithful Pat VILLENEUVE for all the manual work during the spring. Brother Gosselin returned towards the end of May, while Brother LAPLANTE ended a year vacation on the 6th of July. In their spare time, the Brothers built a shack along the road to the snye to accommodate picnickers of the Mission and Hospital, and the School children.

Several workers and visitors again invaded the Island throughout the summer, in search of opportunities for the development of the Country. In June it was Dr. ROBINSON, Government Geographer, who took residence at the Mission. Four Government employees also were given hospitality at the Hospital, while they explored the rapids near Green Island. July 12th brought Dr. FALKONER, sent by the Department of health, for another inspection at the Hospital. A week later, the Ambassador of France, his wife and daughter arrived for a day visit. Three other Officials and a news reporter accompanied the Ambassador. - Among other visitors were Father C. GILLES of Fort Smith, the new Bursar of all the Mackenzie Missions. Doctor TRUESDELL displayed various activities throughout the season in acquainting the visitors with the problems of the North, while the Superior was no less active in submitting his views and those of his people concerning the problems and projects under consideration by the Government Officials. Father TURCOTTE sailed aboard the Sant'Anna on August 16th for a 9 month-visit to his family, and was replaced by Father BEZANNIER as head of the Mission. In the fall, only 47 sacks of grain were harvested compared to 170 the previous year, due to damage done by the grasshoppers. 25 loads of hay were harvested compared to 60 in 1944.

Towards the end of the year, Father BEZANNIER qualified as 'sad' the small attendance at the Sunday Mass. There were only 30 persons, including children at the Midnight Mass at Christmas. On New Year's day also, only a few were present. The Pastor has recorded also that a father and his son, who had come to town for the festival, failed to fulfill their Catholic duties.

1946.

Father V. PHILIPPE arrived in February to preach the 1946 annual retreat, while Father FEUVRIER preached a triduum shortly after to the employees of the Hospital. One had to be an intimate of that missionary to be aware of his talent in music. However, in May, it was made public when he acted as organist in the church during the absence of Sister SARASIN, and until the return of Father TURCOTTE on the 26th. In September, Brother LESSARD discontinued carpentry work because of ill health but took charge of the poultry house from PATRICE, who was given care of the cows then. - 3000 fishes were brought by the SANGUINS on their return from Slave Lake in October. As those provisions were insufficient for the Hospital needs, Father FEUVRIER left by dogs for Fish Lake in November to arrange for more fish and meat. Back home on the 14th, the priest took a week rest and started for another trip to Trout Lake for a two-week pastoral visit to the Indians. And on December 5th, he assisted the pilot hauling a load of fish and 4 tons of moose and caribou meat from Fish Lake.

By that time, Rev. Father SERRUROT had arrived to preach the annual retreat to the two communities. Father BEZANNIER, who had been ill for some time was flown

to Edmonton on December 21st and died three days later at the age of 64 years. The Rev. Father had spent much of his life among the Slave Indians, except for a few years at Rae and Resolution.

In the course of the summer 1946, more inspections and visits were made by experts and Government Officials. An Agronomist was appointed to the direction of the Farm owned by the Indian Agency. Agriculture Official, Mr. DUNSTON of Ottawa, expressed amazement at the fine gardens seen on the Island. The School Inspector made an over-scrupulous investigation of the educational conditions at the St. Margaret's School. - The Superior, a progressive man in several fields, viewed with satisfaction the incoming development in Fort Simpson, and observed with more satisfaction yet the large number of his parishoners receiving Holy Communion at Christmas.

1947.

The New Year opened under the same encouraging auspices, as a large number attended Mass. Father FEUVRIER started shortly after in search of souls at Fort Wrigley, and of meat in the surrounding area. A load of meat was hauled on February 8th, and when the priest returned to Simpson on March 5th, exhausted and with an emaciated face, he felt happy over the results of his work. A week later, he was 'on the go' again for a visit to Rabbit-Skin-River. Those who have known him then bear witness that his travels were no fun but always produced spiritual benefits. # "Travelling for Christ" must have been his Motto.

On the Island, the Feast of Easter on April 6, brought a full church including a number of Protestants. But apparently, the Holy Spirit quit blowing his good inspirations in later months. The Pastor remarked again a decline in the attendance at religious services and said: "Let us pray in the hope that God will grant his followers the grace to understand their duties better." During the months of May and June, a few persons only followed the religious devotions.

The time had come then for Brother LESSARD to take a 4-month vacation. In his absence, the 100 chicks he had ordered arrived by air from Edmonton on May 5th to inaugurate the method of changing the yearly flock of hens. For Brother LAPLANTE the time came on May 28th for another confinement at the Hospital. Having overworked himself at the wood camp and Hansen's saw-mill, the 33-year old Brother was afflicted with rheumatism which forced him to leave on June 24 for an Edmonton Hospital. A 3-week treatment brought him no aparent improvement.

1947 was marked by the arrival of Mr. J. GILBEY, on April 20, to head and organize an Experimental Farm on the Island. A University Graduate in science and agriculture, the Government Official took charge of the Indian Agency's Farm under the authority of the Federal Department of Agriculture. The specific purpose of the Superintendent was to carry on scientific experiments in horticulture, aviculture and in other agricultural activities. Mrs GILBEY assisted her husband in office work. Since then the Farm has collected and recorded valuable scientific informations. A summary has been published by the Superintendent in 1957 (6)

In July of that year, Simpson had lost an old-timer and businessman, Mr. BUD ALLEY who sold out after 20 years of trading on the Island. In 1928 he had

leased lots 42, 44 owned by the Mission, and built on them later on a residence, a store and warehouse which were bought by the Mission in 1947. In early summer, a 7-ton refrigerator obtained from the airport and operated by a gasoline engine was installed in one of the Hospital department. - In later summer, the Superior bought two horses at the cost of \$ 350 from Mr. Bert. NEALEN who had brought them down from Fort Nelson. - Five buffaloes killed at Fort Smith were taken to Simpson on October 1st, as a new source of meat supplies for the Hospital. It proved unsatisfactory in later years, since the inferior quality of that meat could not be compared with imported frozen beef.

The 20 years of Brother GOSSELIN's service at the Sacred Heart Mission came to an end on October 22nd as he departed for Fort Providence. The 41-year old Brother Coadjutor who had overspent himself since 1927 left behind him the reputation of a hard and efficient worker in addition of being a good and religious man. - Brother M. LAROQUE arrived on October 17th to take his place. A skilled man on the eve of his forties, the Brother undertook in November the overhauling and repairing of machines, motors and instruments of all sorts. On the 20th, he was seen on the school ground building a slide for the children. Two weeks later, he installed an electric motor to operate the water pump in the well to replace the cumbersome gasoline motor.

A young Belgian priest, Father André VERMAUT, came on December 5 to relieve the Superior of some of his functions. Father FEUVRIER would be free then to spend more time in the service of Wrigley and surrounding camps. Father VERMAUT revealed artistic qualities when he organized and conducted a party on December 16th, in honor of the Superior, to celebrate his 50th birthday. - The year ended as it had started with a large number of parishoners attending Mass at Christmas and approaching the Holy Table. During the festivals, Father TURCOTTE showed silent films for the public in the St. Margaret's School and to the Hospital patients. On January 9th, he preached the annual retreat to both communities and thence on the 21st, he started on a tour of other retreats in the Vicariate beginning at Fort Providence. Having completed a 6-year term as Superior of the Mission, he was appointed director at Fort McMurray. Thus ended the 15 years of his activities among the Slaves of Simpson, Wrigley, Liard, Nelson and Providence.

The acting Superior, Father FEUVRIER soon realized that the people of Simpson had not reached yet the summit of spiritual perfection. A class of idle residents roving around the Hospital at night and disturbing the peace of the patients caused the Pastor some worries. Those idle young men seldom realized that their disturbing behaviour often resulted in the dismissal by the Hospital authorities, of one or other girl employee who became the object of nasty love affairs. - Meanwhile, Father FEUVRIER organized an airlift to Fish Lake and Sibbeston Lake for two loads of fishes that cost \$ 80 and 72 respectively, which he said, was 'too costly'.

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Weddings appeared to have been already a novelty in Fort Simpson in 1948. George VILLENEUVE and Coline SOSSIE, who were married on March 29th in the Sacred Heart church, have attracted a large crowd for the ceremony performed by Father FEUVRIER. In the evening, a party was held in their honor. Local artists gave a performance of cow-boy songs and music.

After open water, Father FEUVRIER went down to his Mission at Fort Wrigley with Brother LAROQUE who was to do some repair work at the house, for two weeks. Back at Simpson, the acting Superior presided at a first communion ceremony on June 6th, and performed two other marriages. At the end of the month, he presided at the distribution of prizes at the St. Margaret's School. By that time, Brother LAROQUE was called to another Mission and left Fort Simpson. He was replaced shortly after by Brother KORPEL of Fort Rae. The ailing Father MOISAN came from Providence to take up residence at the Hospital for medical care and served, at the same time, as Chaplain of the patients.

The main event, however, occurred on July 31st when the Superior, Father V. PHILIPPE, assumed his new function. A native of the old France, the Missionary came North in 1936, first at Good Hope, thence at Fort Norman, Arctic-Red-River and Aklavik, Father PHILIPPE was afterwards the General Bursar of the MacKenzie Missions for a period of three years. Returning from France in 1948, Father PHILIPPE was 48 years old. A large congregation heard his first sermon the following Sunday. But the new Pastor observed a small assistance at Mass two Sundays later, although the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was celebrated on that Sunday. - The total Catholic population numbered then 385, half of them being of Indian status.

A 56-year old Indian was received into the Church by Father MOISAN on September 26th. The man, who had led a somewhat strained life, had neglected to receive the Sacrament of Baptism. An illness had brought him to the Hospital under the spiritual care of Father MOISAN. - Pastoral duties led Father FEUVRIER to Sibbeston Lake in November. At the same time, he was to ascertain the availability of the fish supply for the Hospital. Unfortunately, the plentiful fish caught in the fall had spoiled and were not suitable for consumption by the patients. The priest made a hard trip back on December 5th. Two weeks later, he flew down to Wrigley for Christmas. By that time Brother KORPEL had gone to Edmonton for medical care and then ended his short stay at the Sacred Heart Mission.

As the year came to a close, the Pastor expressed the opinion that the discipline of the Church was enforced too softly at Fort Simpson; and he concluded that henceforth more firmness should be used towards the lax and indifferent members of the Church.

1949.

Caribous were in the lime light in 1949, as regulations had placed restrictions on their killing, even for the Hospital patients. On January 3rd, Mr. FRESCOLT, Superintendent of the Forestry and Wild Life, held a conference on the problem with the Superior of the Mission. A licence was granted then to purchase 25 caribous for consumption by the Hospital patients and personnel. The New Year had brought Jos. LAFFERTY from Fort Providence, while January 8th brought Father DESSY from Hay River to preach the annual retreat. Besides 'converting' the two religious communities, the Oblate favored them for two weeks with his communicative joviality. Father FEUVRIER missed both, however, being held up at Fort Wrigley. When he returned on January 25th, he brought the sad news that the caribous had not shown up yet. Due to a shortage of meat supplies for the Hospital, one ton of buffalo meat was flown then from Fort Smith. Meanwhile, Father

PHILIPPE started by dogs on a search for caribous' whereabouts', discovered herds of them in the Willow River area. When he returned to Simpson, he chartered an aircraft. Two loads of meat (one ton and a half) were hauled from Willow Lake on February 18th, at the cost of \$ 80 per load. While visiting a camp abroad, Father FEUVRIER hauled 350 lbs of the precious food. By the time he arrived at the Mission, an airplane was about to leave for Fish Lake to rescue a number of sick persons. He went along on February 25th, as a guide and interpreter, and took time to baptize there a new born baby. Six patients were brought to the Hospital for medical care. Father FEUVRIER may have appeared to the occasional observer as a priest affected with what is called in the French language "Bougeotte" and imperfectly termed in English by the word "Budging". Yet, his intimate companions have known that an earnest love of souls urged him at all time to travel and rove around so much and so often. Thus we find him in March at Jean-Marie-River and thence at Trout-River where he conferred baptism on new-born babies. On that trip, he went as far as the GARGAN's camp, Red-Knife-River, some 60 miles from Fort Providence. When he returned to Jean-Marie-River on Sunday March 11th, the priest found there a number of men in a state of intoxication. Instead of staying with his people for the Sunday Mass, as he had planned, Father FEUVRIER continued his way and camped at night a few miles below the settlement.

Fishing at Sibbeston Lake may have been the favorite project of Father PHILIPPE in those years. On March 24th, he put on his snow shoes and went there to look over the fishing situation. He repaired the shack owned by the Mission for storage of fishing equipment and was satisfied that the fish were plentiful. Although, in his opinion, the cost of transportation by air was too high, the Superior chartered a plane on April 3rd to haul the supplies available then. As half a ton of fish had been brought back, Father PHILIPPE discovered afterwards that a local concern had secured part of the fish put up at Sibbeston Lake. From then on, the Mission discontinued relying on Sibbeston Lake as a source of fish supplies for the Hospital. The shack has been abandoned and its content has wasted or been disposed of.

Father FEUVRIER blessed another marriage on Easter Sunday. (7) And following a visit to Wrigley in May and June, he sailed up to Fort Smith, on August 13th, aboard the Sant'Anna, and thence he went to his native France for a well deserved vacation. Father VERMAUT bid farewell to Simpson on the same day going to a new post at Hay-River, permuting with Father LIZE. The young Brother O. MARCHESSAULT of Fort Providence was given a 3-month leave to help the Brothers at the Mission, until the arrival of Brother LAROQUE in September.

An event that was to influence considerably the Fort Simpson and its population in the later years, occurred on May 18th when a Government Official chose a location for the establishment of an undenominational school. A store owned by Mr. J. CREE on lot 11 was singled out as a temporary classroom, while his residence would serve as a teacherage. In the opinion of a portion of the local white population, there was an urgent need of a school for children of non-Catholic faith. Moreover, the project was in accordance with the recommendations made earlier in 1944 by the Government special inspector, Dr. A. MOORE.(8) But it did cause some concern to the Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission, because of the possibility that a number of Catholic children be drawn into the new institution. When the new school opened in October, the children of two

Catholic families discontinued their education at the St. Margaret's school. Since this subject covers several problems involving principles, persons and facts that affected much the life of Fort Simpson, it will be considered separately in the 3rd Chapter of this book. (9) Viewed in retrospective, the history of the school struggle that started in 1949 reveals a healthy competition which contributed in part to the progress of education on the Island and in the surrounding district. Whatever may have been the motives of the instigators of the movement for an undenominational school owned and operated by the Government, history shall look with a critical eye on their conduct and actions that indirectly threatened the very existence of the Catholic education in the Settlement.

Father PHILIPPE kept his critical eye on the facts of that history in the making, while he cared for the spiritual welfare of his flock. In May and June of that year 1949, he promoted the Rosary Crusade which ended with the promises made by most local Catholics to say daily the Holy Rosary. The Holy Hour on the eve of the First Friday of the month was again encouraged. Once more the organ was placed in the nave of the church to ease singing by the congregation. Not a singer, although appreciative of music and singing, the Superior relied on his assistant, Father LIZE, for their performance in liturgical ceremonies. The latter was a good musician and singer. A native of Québec, Father LIZE had come to Fort Providence in 1942 and thence to Hay-River. In 7 years of missionary work, he had acquired a fairly good knowledge of both the English and Slavy languages. Fort Simpson was honored by the visit of eminent religious visitors in July of that year 1949. There were Archbishop G. BREYNAT, former Vicar Apostolic who celebrated then the Diamond Jubilee of his Oblate Profession at the age of 82 years; the Hon. Mother General of the Grey Nuns; and Rev. Father J. PERRON, assistant general of the Oblate Order, who was on an official visit in the name of the Superior General.

At the Mission, those who have been named "The Unknown Apostles" kept their untiring hands at work. Brother LAPLANTE had then undertaken to renew the foundations of the Fathers' Residence and enlarge its basement. Brother LAROQUE built a porch at the front door, while Brother DELISLE was in charge of the wood camp for cutting 300 cords of green spruce. An accident injured Brother LAPLANTE on September 9th, as he got squeezed on the bulldozer against the basement of the Mission which he was digging; and Father PHILIPPE had his right hand caught in the mechanism of the refrigerator which he had tried to repair.

On the political scene, the people of Fort Simpson exercised for the first time, their right to choose a representative to the Federal Government. There were 264 persons listed as voters, while 176 only cast their ballot on June 27th to elect the Liberal candidate, Mr. A. SIMMONS, who received 88 votes against the nearest opponent, Mr. M. BERRY, who collected 84.

In another field of some importance to the people of Fort Simpson, the Surveyer General of Canada, Mr. PALSEN, began in November a survey of a strip of land bordering lots 21 and 23 owned by the Mission. Twenty owners of houses had for some years occupied and leased small parcels of that land along the main road. The survey lasted from November 20th till December 7th. During that time, Mr. PALSEN and his aide had boarded at the Mission at the invitation of the Superior. - A misunderstanding regarding the cost of survey had developed between

Father PHILIPPE and the Governemnt Department before the party arrived at Simpson. Informed that the sum of \$ 574.12 plus extra expenses would be charged for the survey, the Superior declined to endorse the responsability of such an expense and referred the case to the central Administration at Fort Smith for a decision. (10) In his opinion, the cost of survey should be borne by the Department. The Vicar Apostolic, Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER refused to agree on the payment of that sum, but the survey party proceeded to do the work (11) A long correspondance has ensued for the clarification of the deal until finally the Central Administration paid the sum of \$ 599.28 in 1953 (12). This information may serve as a reminder to those who have purchased or will purchase any parcel of that surveyed land, that the cost of survey has been \$ 75 per acre. (13) This sum must be added to the purchasing value of the lots.

In October, a recreation hall was opened on the upper floor of the Mission for the benefit of the public. A full size pool-table built by Brother LAROQUE, bingo, ping-pong and other games attracted the youth and on certain evenings a large crowd of people. The hall served also for movie-picture showings, plays and concerts. - The Superior had been aware of the need of a publication as a means of information and instruction for the Catholic population. Then, he prepared the first issue in November with the assistance of Father LIZE. Under the name of "CONFLUENT WHISPERS", the bulletin contained doctrinal and historical subjects, local news and other subjects and stories. The second issue was published in December and others followed in the following year.

In mid-December, Father PHILIPPE drove to Wrigley for the feast of Christmas in the absence of Father FEUVRIER. At Simpson a large attendance at the midnight Mass was reported by Father LIZE who was alone then. A few inebriated persons were turned back, leaving the whole congregation in an atmosphere of meditation and prayer. - At Wrigley, Father PHILIPPE noted the joy expressed by the population to have the midnight Mass in their church. He remarked at the same time the religious ignorance of many and a moral confusion due to a degree of superstition. In conclusion, the Superior stated that a priest should be in permanent residence at that post.

1 9 5 0 .

An accident that might have been fatal occured to Brother DELISLE. While he was digging in the Hospital well, he suffered a stroke caused by asphyxiant air. Brother LAROQUE too, suffered a body injury that brought him to the Hospital. - The Superior was faced with the problem of providing enough food for the patients filling the Hospital to full capacity. He chartered an airplane for hauling 500 fishes from Sibbeston Lake at 16 cents per pound, for transportation alone.

The annual retreat preached by Father METAYR went on as usual in January. Father LIZE started out immediately after, for a trip to Nahanni Butte at the camps of G. KRAUSS, O. LINDBERG, LAFLEUR, MATU and others. He travelled along with T. TRINDELL who was going to his trap line. It was a hard trip; and the two-week visit produced limited spiritual benefits. The families appreciated, however, the visit of the priest and the reception of the Sacraments. The young Edwin LINDBERG accompanied Father LIZE for part of the trip. - The Missionary was on the trail again in March for ministry at Jean-Marie-River and Trout-River. He travelled

along with Vic SQUIRREL going to his trap line. Later in the month, he made a special trip to Rabbit-Skin-River to confer Baptism on new-born baby Agnes NORWEGIAN.

An important change in the organization of Indian Affairs has taken place in 1950, when the function of local agent was given independent status. Doctor TRUESDELL who had hitherto cumulated the function with that of medical officer, was replaced by MR. L. HUNTER with permanent residence at Fort Norman. The new Agent paid a visit at the Mission on March 24th and appeared to be a sympathetic person. Shortly after, Dr. ORFORD of Camsell Hospital inspected the St. Margaret's Hospital and made a number of recommendations that should be implemented gradually. One of them was the segregation of the tuberculosis patients from others which would require the construction of an addition to the building, with a veranda for the comfort of the patients. Another was the boarding accommodation of the employees to be separated from the main building.

The Pastor wondered what had taken place in the life of his flock, as he observed notable absences at the religious services of obligation. The attendance had been poor on Easter, meager on Ascension Day and the following Sundays. No one received Holy Communion on the feast of Pentecost. And there was little response during the month of June to his invitation to the devotion in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Patron of the church. Then Father PHILIPPE anxiously asked himself "What to do?" Some uneasiness was felt with the Catholic Metis population, since the movement for a neutral school was started by a group of Protestants. He wondered what false reports or slanders were being spread against the Mission and her institutions. Moreover an increasing abuse of intoxicating liquors by a portion of his flock worsened the relations between a number of Catholics and their priest, who raised his voice in defense of morality. His only conclusion then appeared to have been: "The powerful Heart of Jesus shall one day overcome those obstacles." (14)

The destruction by fire of the neutral school in February had prompted a rally in favour of a single large school in the Settlement. Meetings and gathering stirred up public opinion and did occasioned part of the uneasiness noted by Father PHILIPPE. Not being deterred from his ministry, the priest endeavoured to stir up the piety of the young people. On the occasion of a First Communion on the feast of the Sacred Heart, he consecrated the first communicants to the Mother of Christ, gave them the Mount Carmel scapular, and received the renewal of their baptismal vows.

The arrival of Bishop TROCELLIER at the end of June brought a diversion to the minds of the personnel, and it gave George SIBBESTON an opportunity to pilot His Excellency up to Fort Liard for a few days visit. Rev. Father J.L. MICHEL, the first and newly appointed Religious Superior of the Oblates in the Mackenzie, accompanied Bishop TROCELLIER. Brother LAROQUE was informed then of his transfer to Fort Franklin and once more bid farewell to Simpson, as he sailed down with the Bishop on the 5th of July.

A new system for providing fresh meat for the Hospital patients was inaugurated that summer when the 'Yellowknife Transportation Co.' brought down in a freezer a few tons of frozen meat. Among the 30 tons of freight received by the Mission that summer, was a 2-ton truck, a 1936 Chevrolet, relinquished by the Fort Smith Mission.

The whole population of the Settlement and district had undergone a medical examination towards the middle of July. Doctor BUCHANAN, of Edronton, X-rayed 313 persons, as part of a program to combat tuberculosis in the North. Doctor FLEMMING had arrived then as the new medical officer to replace Dr. TRUESDELL. The latter bid farewell to Fort Simpson and her people on the 2nd of September. For twenty years, he had served the population in the medical profession and taken part in social activities. A marked figure, a pioneer and a jovial person, Dr. TRUESDELL had been also a controvertial character. At the time of his leave, the pioneering spirit of the population was coming to an end. The coming of the young Doctor, with a modern personality coincided with the beginning of an area marked with a new spirit in the community. The cordial relations that existed among all classes of people gave place to a sort of segregation between them. The rustic standard of life common to all gave place also to a more comfortable bien-être among the white portion of the population. A new age had given place to the old one. The Mission and the Doctor entertained cordial relations, except for a few stormy conflicts, that developed at times beneath the surface, and caused delicate or tense relations.

The Superior went down to Wrigley for priestly work in July. During his absence, and by coincidence only, his assistant Father LIZE reported a large assistance at Mass on Sundays. The fact reflects on the fluctuating attitude of the Catholic population, which contrasted singularly with that of a White employee at the Airport; Mr. THURBER, who travelled 13 miles every Sunday for one year to fulfill his Sunday duties, and this on good or bad roads, as well as in good and bad weather.

A case of youth delinquency shocked the saner portion of the town in later September of that year 1950. A 14-year old boy broke into a store and private houses, robbing and damaging goods and property. Brought to court and convicted, the youth was fined 20 dollars and jailed for one year. The Superior remarked then that the sorrow of the parents shedding abundant tears might have been saved, if their child had been given a good example and a Christian education in due time.

A former "globe trotter", Brother A. JOSSET, was welcome at the Mission on that same day for a 3-month job of fixing the electrical machines and equipment. The 38-year old Brother had served in the French Navy on all seas before coming North to serve the Arctic Missions. October 22nd witnessed the return of Father FEUVRIER from the old country. The daring priest who had paddled and drifted down the Nelson and Liard Rivers for 22 days, was warmly welcome at that late time of the fall. He alone, may tell the dangers encountered throughout the sailing down the rapids and shallow waters of the treacherous Liard River.

Considerable activities on the educational field enlivened the town during the summer and fall of that year 1950. Some of them will be related in the 3rd Chapter of this Sketch. (15) We should like to mention before hand that Government directions were given on September 27th by acting Inspector BAILEY for the operation of the newly built neutral school. And by that time, it was alleged that attendance at Government school was compulsory. Family allowance payments would be discontinued to parents sending their children to the privately owned St. Margaret's School. (16) The new inspector, Mr. LOW, came in on November 12th and examined the situation. When the new school opened on the 24th, all Catholic

children, except three, discontinued at the St. Margaret's School and went to the other. Obviously, it was a challenge to Catholic education at Fort Simpson. The Mission authorities considered the threat seriously. In early December, the Superior attended to another duty as he was called to confer Baptism on a newly born child of Mr. and Mrs. F. TETSO at Burnt Island. On the 7th, he paid a visit to the lonely trapper Pete McKEOWN living in a nearby camp. We mention incidentally, that the priest travelled for some distance with the Rev. BELL who was returning from Two-Islands.

While Father FEUVRIER had gone by air to Wrigley for the mid-winter, here at Simpson the Pastor observed a dim atmosphere affecting a portion of his flock. At a midnight Mass, attended by a large crowd, he noted the presence of Protestants, including the TEACHER of the neutral school. This type of achronic devotion, in the opinion of Father PHILIPPE, was confusing a number of Catholics who mistakenly take alluring civilities for genuine religion. - The end of the year took Father LIZE on a ride to Rabbit-Skin-River. - And at the Mission, the Brothers deepened the Hospital well, as it was low on water.

1951.

The Indians of Jean-Marie-River, who had been given continued attention by their Pastors, welcomed Father LIZE among them on January 3rd of the new year 1951. On the Island, activities enlivened in the educational field. The Home And School Association met on January 8th to draw up a constitution. At another meeting held on the 29th, those present heard the school teacher, Mr. BLELLER proposing the use of the former CREE's residence as a temporary boarding shelter for some 12 to 15 children, pending the erection of a Hostel. He estimated at \$ 20 per month the cost of boarding one pupil in such a Hostel. (17) Apparently, the bright plans did not get Government approval, since Mr. BLELLER announced at another meeting that they had met some difficulties. On March 12th, Mr. J. CRAIG, local manager of the H.B.Co., proposed the engagement of a second teacher for all lower grades, and the closing down of the St. Margaret's School as a distinctive institution. While the Government had approved of the proposal, Sister PEDNAULT returned unexpectedly. Thence the approval was withdrawn and the 'statu quo' maintained, as the St. Margaret's School reopened on the 2nd of April. The executive Committee of the Home And School Association met on May 27th with the two teachers, Sister PEDNAULT and Mr. BLELLER, to study a proposal of an enlargement at the Government school for a kindergarten class. They intended to interview the Member of Parliament, Mr. A. SIMMONS, the Commissioner, Mr. YOUNG and the director of the Northern Administration, Mr. F.J. CUNNINGHAM in favour of their project. (18) While the pressure continued to draw the Catholic children of school age under the control of Government owned and operated institutions, The Mission personnel proposed the erection of a boarding school on the Island for the out-of-town children from Wrigley and Liard. (19) Eventually, all plans were shelved, but the struggle around the Catholic education was kept alive. Father PHILIPPE found in it a reinvigorated ardor (20), which receded only when he departed from Fort Simpson a few months later, being called to another Mission.

In the meantime, he had attended to his other duties, editing the "Con-fuent Whispers", directing the completion of the addition at the Hospital, and the construction of a warehouse. He also made arrangements for hauling 2 tons of fish by air from Hay-River.

At the Hospital, a water softener was installed by Brother JOSSET, but it proved afterwards to be ineffective. Father MOISAN received a second time the Sacrament of Extreme-Unction on the 15th of February. Father M. BEAUREGARD preached the annual retreat towards the end of March. Brother JOSSET departed for Aklavik on the 2nd of April, while Father FEUVRIER was given an airlift that nearly ended in a tragedy on the 7th. The aircraft which he boarded had gone to Willow River for a load of 20 caribous, but failed to take off with its load. Having taxied three times in deep and soft snow without success, the pilot agreed to Father FEUVRIER's decision that the meat should be abandoned, except for 200 lbs. They took off with much difficulty, and when they reached the airport, the gas tank was found empty. John BOURASSA confessed that he had escaped a tragic crash. The illfated pilot lost his life in a crash a few years later. - On the 26th of May, Father FEUVRIER started in his canoe for Fort Wrigley, but took shelter in a creek some miles above. His delay to arrive there caused much alarm, while Father PHILIPPE hurried to follow him. By that time however, the lonely priest had slipped in Wrigley unnoticed and unaware of the search. Although the bad weather had slowed down the sailing, the Father had taken time to gather a provision of wood at the mouth of a creek for the next winter.

In the relation of events which concern the Mission and its institutions (Hospital and School), we have deliberately avoided reviving the memory of many people who acted on the scene of Fort Simpson, during those years. It would be impossible to do them all justice, in relating some of their deeds, and it would be unfair to recall some of them and neglect the others. Yet, in passing, we wish to pay a tribute to an old-timer of Fort Simpson, Mr. Angus SHERWOOD, in the words written in this year 1951 by the editor of the "Confluent Whispers" : "I wish to thank you for the interest and sympathy shown in your letter to your 'old friends'. It is not so often that we hear a White man speaking with such praise of the Indians. I wish to thank you also for the words in your last paragraph, 'You must be doing good work there.' Since the last few years we have not been in the habit of hearing such compliments; it is nice, indeed, amid criticisms of all kinds and more detraction than help and encouragement, to hear a discrepant voice addressing lauds. Thank you." (21) Mr. A. SHERWOOD, who is the Post Master at Norman Wells, has yet a continued interest in Fort Simpson and its people.

Father PHILIPPE went aboard the Sant'Anna on July 26th to attend a meeting of Missionaries at Fort Smith and confer with the Superintendent of the Oblate Commission of Indians and Eskimos welfare, Father A. RENAUD. I recall the plea made when by the Superior of the Sacred Heart Mission in favour of a boarding school at Fort Simpson. Unfortunately, both Church and Government authorities viewed then his project as unfeasible or at least premature. Back on the Island, the Superior recalled Father FEUVRIER from Wrigley to assume the interim functions at the head of the Mission, and on August 27th, bid farewell to Simpson and went to Fort Franklin as director of the Mission.

Other changes took place at the Mission then. Brother DELISLE went to Aklavik at the end of the month, and was replaced by Brother A. VACHON who arrived on the 17th of September. The 42-year old Beauceron had come North in 1942, first at Fort Chipewyan and thence at Rae, Resolution, Providence and Aklavik. The new Superior was Father L. DELALANDE, who had been a missionary among the Eskimos for 20 years. At the age of 56 years, he was to assume functions much different than those performed in the lone Arctic Missions, and was handicapped by the

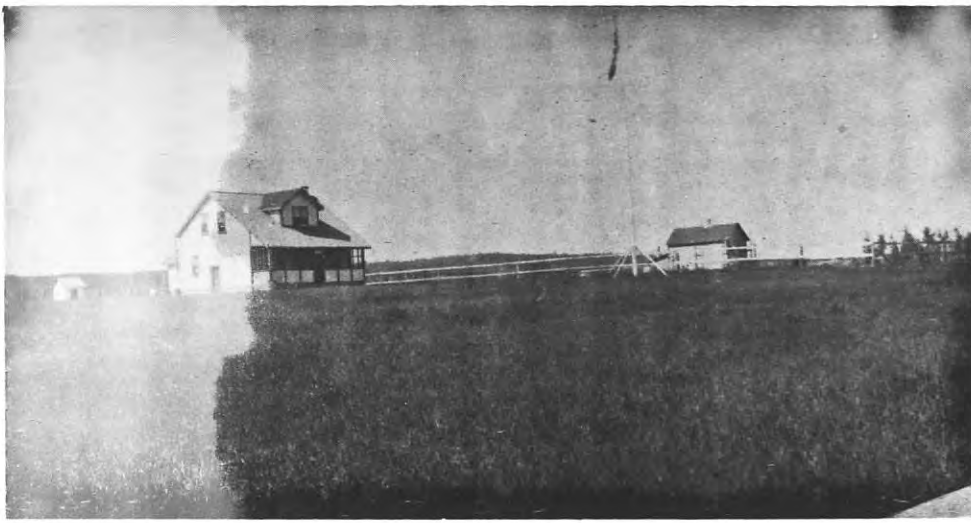
difficulties of the language (Slavy) used by a large portion of the population. Father DELALANDE arrived on the 6th of November. In his maiden sermon delivered on the 11th, the Pastor gave a special attention to Catholic education and school and reminded the parents of their grievous obligations towards their children in that most important matter. He indicated that a visit to each parishioner was part of his program and he expressed the hope that the unity commended by the Lord would be practiced by Catholics in the community. - On the 22nd, the Superior outlined to a gathering the norms of his conduct in both spiritual and educational matters. And he informed the parents that all his work would be limited to their interests, letting others take care of their own.

In the meantime, Father FEUVRIER performed the function of Bursar, relieving Father DELALANDE of the administrative task, until his leave for Fort Wrigley on the 2nd of December. Father LIZE twice visited the Jean-Marie-River camp in early October and late November. On him rested mainly then, and for some time, the task of editing the "Confluent Whispers". He assisted the Superior in reviving recreation and entertainment for the youth at the Mission Hall. The Pastor reintroduced the Sunday collection (80.cents on the 16th of December). A musician, Father DELALANDE replaced Sister PEDNEAULT as organist and assisted in the preparation of the Christmas concert by the Catholic children.

The worst tragedy that ever happened on the Island occurred in the night of Christmas, when Mrs. G. SIBBESTON and her grand-daughter were burnt to death in their home. As the husband was absent then, Father LIZE went down to his camp to inform him of the sad accident. It was a great affliction for the good George; and for the whole town it had been a regrettable event. For some negligent Catholics, the tragedy provided timely reflections.

1952.

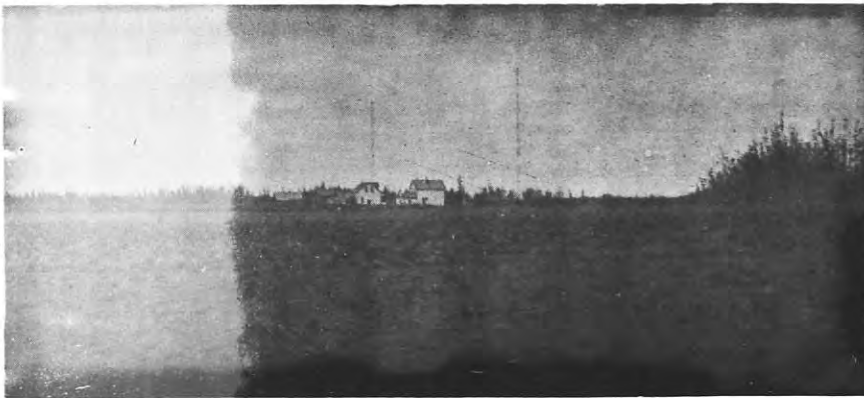
Father DELALANDE and his assistants, Fathers FEUVRIER and LIZE, were convinced that their parishioners were not any better nor worse Catholics than the average members of the Church. They observed a portion of them who strove to observe the commandments of God. They had seen them receiving faithfully the Sacraments and practicing the virtues that make saints; they observed too, a number of others who at times did not live up to their Christian duties and perhaps neglected the means of salvation. Yet, this portion of their flock aimed at their only goal into this life: the sanctification of their souls. Truly enough however, it was evident that a few parishioners were unholy and no less than bad. They were bad precisely because they failed to live in conformity with the requirements of their Church. Just like the bad fruit owes its foulness, not to the tree that bore it, but to outside influences such as the sting of an insect or the presence of a worm. The Pastors of the Sacred Heart Mission endeavoured to stimulate the efforts of the good ones, and to strengthen the good will of the faltering. They also went after the lost sheep and warned the Judas as the loving Master did in His earthly life. An occasion was offered to the Catholic parents to test their faithfulness to the Church, when the St. Margaret's school reopened after Easter. "Who is not with Me, said Christ, is against Me." A few parents only maintained their children in a school other than that of their Church. Father DELALANDE made it clear to them that they could not serve "two masters".



Indian Agent Residence—1921



Imperial Oil's Airplane: 1st landing in 1921



1st Radio Station—1925



Mr. F. Harris



Dr. Truesdell



**Jos. Villeneuve and Wife
Marie Augustine Bouvier**



Nakekon 1923 1st Chief



**W. Marg. Hope
Nintse**



Peter Sandison and Wife Cecilia



**Alexis Lafferty and Wife Leyza MacIver
Jonas, Thomas, Henry**



**Mrs. Boniface Lafferty and Family
Grand children and others, Fort Providence**

Father FEUVRIER who performed then the functions of pastor of the Wrigley Mission and Bursar of the Sacred Heart Mission, took much pain to secure and organize the supplies of fish needed for the Hospital patients. On March 14th, he went to Trout Lake by chartered plane to get one load. However, he decided to try fishing at Fish Lake in the fall.

Father LIZE travelled to Jean-Marie-River as usual and learnt there that the Indians had asked for a small boarding school in their settlement. The project of a small Boarding School or Hostel was also promoted by a group of persons in Simpson, as well as by the Indian Agent, Mr. HUNTER, (22) and Inspector BAILEY. Father LIZE took off on the 31st of March for a vacation in his native Province of Québec. He planned to confer with the civil and ecclesiastical authorities on the school problems in and around Simpson during his visit in Ottawa.

Father DELALANDE had begun then to take lessons in the Slavy language under the direction of the polyglot Theodore TRINDELL. In March, he gave a series of instructions to a prospective convert, and afterwards preached a spiritual recollection to the Hospital employees. By that time, the health of the Superior began to deteriorate and forced him occasionally to take a rest at the Hospital. Father FEUVRIER relieved him in giving the lenten instructions and the additional sermons during the Holy Week. Nevertheless, the Superior, alert as ever on the school situation, raised his voice to remind Catholic parents of their grave duties towards their children. At one time, he warned parents against sending thier children to a Sunday school other than that of their Church. (23) At another he directed Father LUSSON giving the Sunday instruction to speak on Catholic education and parental duties. (24) On Sunday July 20, the Pastor propounded again the directives of the Church and explained them as enforced by the ecclesiastical authority, Bishop TROCELLIER. (25) At his request, the visiting Father W. LEISING commented again on the Bishop's directives on Sunday August 24. (26) Obviously, the emphasis placed by the Pastors on Catholic education was to arouse some reaction among the population. It came on September 30th, from the teacher of the neutral school, Mr. LORD, a Protestant who declared to Sister PEDNEAULT his dislike over the refusal of the Sacraments by the Catholic Church authorities to parents whose children attend the Neutral School. The impertinent Government Official added that such a drastic measure was causing much wrangling among the whole population. (27) It is worthy of note that the pressure made then by the Home And School Association for the amalgamation of the two local schools had failed to impress the new Superintendent of Schools, Mr. J.V. JACOBSON. (28) The promoters of the "one school" did not admit defeat of their purpose as is evidenced by the future events.

The activities of the Mission continued as usual under the vigorous direction of Father DELALANDE and inspite of his failing health. In February, he had trained altar boys to serve Mass. Peter LAFFERTY, Archie and Billy VILLENEUVE performed well the ceremonies. Evening recreation and entertainment were continued at the Mission Hall, which included showing of sound moving pictures. In need of physical relaxation, Father DELALANDE planted trees in front of the Hospital in May and again in September. A shortage of meat supply caused him much worries then. The half-a-ton of buffalo meat flown in by the Mission's plane in May and July had soon vanished, as well as the 1500 lbs brought in June by the Associated Airways. One ton of beef was bought in August from Mr. J.W. BROWNING who decided then to dispose of his livestock. A few hundred pounds were received

from Fort Providence, and cases of canned meat had to be purchased from CREE's store to keep up with the patients' hunger. Unfortunately the potato crop yielded only 100 sacks. Fort Providence shipped down 125 sacks and Mr. BROWNING brought in 1000 lbs more of beef in September. A few tons of salted beef in barrels were shipped from Edmonton, and cows were butchered to complete part of the winter supplies, so that the Superior was relieved of his worry on that point.

Brother LAROQUE had bid farewell again to Simpson on the 8th of April, and was replaced by Brother L'ECUYER who arrived on the 14th. The 53-year old Brother, a native of Montréal, the Oblate coadjutor had served first at Fort Chipewyan and thence in Resolution, and again Chipewyan before coming to Simpson. A layman, who had offered his services to the Mission of Mackenzie for several years, Mr. A. GAILLARD, landed on the Island on the 22nd of June, for the service of the Sacred Heart Mission. Swiss by birth, Mr. GAILLARD worked and lived with the community of Oblates and was thought by many to be a religious Brother. Having the care of the cows (which he did not like), his preferred function was to work with the horses and labor on the farm. - Brother LAPLANTE was back again on July 31st, resume his former functions. - A new comer at the Sacred Heart Mission in August was the young Brother J.M. TURCOTTE. A mechanic and "jack of all trades", the Brother replaced Brother A. VACHON who was sent to Aklavik. Several improvements were made by the Brothers throughout the summer. A new garage had been started by Brother VACHON. A fire escape was built outside the Hospital. A second cess-pool was dug for sewage. A new grainery was built. A 1000-gallon tank for hot water was installed at the Hospital, and a new furnace at the Mission for hot air heating. In the fall, Brother TURCOTTE started hauling sand and gravel for a concrete floor in the laundry room. A D-2 Caterpillar Tractor with blade and winch was added to the farm equipment this summer 1952. Brother TURCOTTE built a bob-sleigh for hauling bigger loads of wood. All improvements have been made to reduce manual work and speed up the activities of the personnel in and around the Mission.

The "CONFLUENT WHISPERS" published for the past 3 years was given a new name: "CATHOLIC VOICE", in the June issue. The Editor, Father DELALANDE thought that the evolution was not only "logical", as he wanted the bulletin to be a "Catholic Voice For Catholic Ears", with the motto "GOD FIRST", in the individual, the home and social life. Audio-visual aids equipment was brought by Father LIZE as he returned from his holidays on the 24th of November. A new 16mm Bell and Howell sound projector had been long wanted for the entertainment and information of the patients and school children. The novelty brought by Father LIZE was a "Webcor" tape-recorder. For some weeks, the new machine was kept turning by two shifts of amateurs recording and playing music, songs, voices and even breathings. The Mission was fortunate then to rely on a Radio-operator, Don LAPOINTE, for keeping the equipments in good condition. Don was a handy man too for fixing electrical fixtures and apparatus, often in need of his services. Mrs. LAPOINTE, a convert, was conferred Baptism on Christmas of that year 1952. An unusual event marked the celebration of the midnight Mass, as Sister PEDNEAULT, a professional musician, played hymns on a violin during the ceremony. Special circumstances warranted the use of that instrument, since the rules of the Church forbids it during the liturgical ceremonies. In any case, it was a reminder of a similar event, some 60 years past, when Father LECOMTE accompanied with his guitar the Christmas hymns sung during the Midnight Mass. (29)

It may be of interest to note that special rules govern the religious and spiritual life of the Missions in the Mackenzie. Such rules make exception to the Canon Law that regulates the whole Catholic world, as they take into account the abnormal local conditions of organization in the North. For instance, liturgical ceremonies may be performed with reduced rites and number of servers. Or, the limited period for Easter duties is extended to the whole calendar year. Also the number of days of fast and abstinence is limited to four only. Thus the Sacred Heart Mission has no standard status of an organized parish, not even one of quasi-parish, because the number and the standard of parishioners are short of the required conditions. This explains the absence of regular fee charges for religious services and liturgical ceremonies, such as marriages and funerals. There is no legal tithes enforced for the support of the Pastors, nor for the maintenance of the church building and services.

1953.

The New Year has often been, if not always, a day of rejoice mingled with sadness for the Pastors of the Sacred Heart Mission. Abuses of intoxicating liquors with their sequences of moral disorders burdened the conscience of too many Catholics and caused them to fail in their obligation of attending Mass. The disgraceful trials that brought them to court with the ensuing sentences of fines or jail, prolonged the worries and sorrows of those who overspent themselves for the spiritual welfare of their whole flock. - In an earnest effort to arm the youth against such failings, Father DELALANDE inaugurated, in January 1953, new methods for religious instruction. In later months, he conducted personally a period of adoration in the church with the school children, directing vocal prayers and hymns and making appropriate exhortation on Holy Eucharist. In March the Superior thought necessary to enforce the laws of the Church, by postponing the Baptism of a new born baby, whose parents had failed to give their elder children a Christian education. Repeated warning have been given against the sending of their children to the "neutral school". On April 2nd, eve of the first Friday, father DELALANDE preached a "Holy Hour" in the church before a small group of faithful. Having words of praise for them, he however remarked that religious fervor was unknown to most Catholics of Fort Simpson. Eventually, the moral constraint imposed on the Superior on account of the exhausting task impelled him to consider a change of functions and to suggest it to the Bishop. On the 14th of May, he bid farewell to Fort Simpson with regret, wishing well to those he had earnestly guided in the footsteps of Christ in the pale of His Church.

Meanwhile, Fathers FEUVRIER and LIZE had been travelling back and forth to give the scattered Indians the spiritual care of their priestly functions. Additional care had been given by Father FEUVRIER for fishing at Spruce Lake by Philip TALE. He drove there by dogs in March to have things ready for hauling. Six trips were made by Father W. LEISING piloting the Mission's plane, on the 14, 15, and 16th of March, with a total of 4 tons of fish and caribou meat. 1600 lbs of buffalo meat had been brought from Fort Smith by Father LEISING to keep up with the hunger of the 60 patients under care at the Hospital. - While Brother LAPLANTE reshaped the interior of the Mission's chapel and enlarged the windows, in the early part of the year, Brother TURCOTTE built a dark-room for X-Ray equipment at the Hospital. Father L. LEMER, a missionary at the Arctic Coast, arrived on the 4th of March to preach the annual retreat. Father FEUVRIER assumed temporarily the functions of Superior, after the departure of Father

DELALANDE, but continued his regular visits to Fort Wrigley. - The job of digging a 1500 feet long ditch for a sewage disposal line, that had been started the previous year, was continued during the summer 1953. (30) - In July, Brother LAPLANTE began the construction of a new barn at the exact location where the first Hospital had been built. Those familiar with the Mission's life, could observe then the intense activities carried on by the personnel and the employees.

Father S. LESAGE arrived from Fort Smith on the 31st of July to assume the direction of the busy bees. As the writer has introduced the previous Superiors, he must not fail to note that the new one had ministered since 1933 among the Hare Indians at Fort Norman and Good Hope, thence at Fort Providence. Following a severe illness in 1942-43, the priest ministered at Fort McMurray and Waterways until 1950, when called at Fort Smith to act as chancellor of Bishop TROCELLIER. Crowned with white hair at the age of 51 years, Father LESAGE may as well confess that he came to Fort Simpson with much apprehension and no less determination. - Father FEUVRIER sailed down to Wrigley the same day. - Father LIZE acted as bursar, while Brothers LESSARD, LAPLANTE, TURCOTTE and Monsieur GAILLARD were responsible for the maintenance of the institutions.

Teaching at the St. Margaret's School was discontinued by the Grey Nuns. The local school situation required special attention from the Pastor. One of his first decisions was the organization of an "Advisory School Board" to meet the situation and take care of Catholic education in the Settlement. (31) A first meeting was held on the 16th of August, at which an executive of five members was elected. They were Messrs E. LAFFERTY, R. GAUDRY, F. SIBBESTON, R. CHENIER and S BYER. The coming of a lay teacher at the St. Margaret's School had necessitated the arrangement of a teachersage. A portion of the Hospital warehouse, made suitable and comfortable for that purpose, was ready for occupancy by Mr. FELLOWES on the 8th of October. A large hot air furnace was installed in the basement dug hurriedly in September. The other portion of the warehouse was turned into a room for the registered Nurse, Miss PLAMONDON. At the school, an addition was built in August for a better accommodation of the pupils.

Twenty-one children boarded the Sant'Anna on the 7th of September going to the Fort Providence Residential School. Father FEUVRIER accompanied them for a week visit at the Mission there. On the 19th, he went down to Wrigley for one month. Again on the 28th of October he drove by dogs to Spruce Lake for supervising the fishing by Philip TALE. Instead of coming back to Simpson along the winter road, as it was expected by his Superior, the roving priest drove to Fort Wrigley. Ant. ANTOINE, who had been sent from Simpson to meet Father FEUVRIER on the trail on the 1st of December, came back alone, while the Father arrived the next day by air from Wrigley. - The new barn and a new garage were sufficiently completed to permit occupancy in late fall. By that time, Brother LESSARD had left for a vacation. On the 12th of October, a night fireman began his functions to relieve the Brothers of that work and for fire protection. It was Jos. LAFFERTY who could be and has been since relied upon, just as one member of the personnel.

Since the departure of Father DELALANDE, the Catholic Voice had been published by Father LIZE. Father FEUVRIER too had been an occasional contributor to the bulletin. The November issue of that year 1953 had two pages by Father J. DENIS, Superior of the Fort Providence Mission. By the end of the year, the "Catholic Voice" had become a monthly publication.

The Mission administration had then 90 persons to provide with food. Three tons of frozen fish were hauled from Spruce Lake on the 15th of December and later in February. Five tons of buffalo meat were brought from Fort Smith and 175 hens were butchered to complete the supplies of fresh food for the year.

The Catholic population in Simpson numbered 387 out of a total of 536, or 72 %. 13 children had been conferred the Sacrament of Baptism in 1953. Bishop TROCELLIER administered Confirmation to 15 children and one adult. The Pastor had observed in recent months the edifying exemplary life of a few Catholic families of Government Officials. Those are always assets in a community. Since their deeds 'thunder what they are', they contrast with the behaviour of the average member of the Church. The contrast is sharpened in a community, as is the case at Fort Simpson, where the majority has no or little education and social standard. Because of their deep and lasting influence, this small group may become the natural leaders in the religious and other fields. On January 13th of the new year 1954, those men and women gathered at the St. Margaret's School and formed a Study Club in view of improving their knowledge in the Christian Faith and Morals. The members took the decision however, that the ladies would do better to meet separately and form a section of the "Catholic Women League". Mrs. S. BYER was then elected president of the group at a meeting held on the 24th. Sister T. CHALOUX, Superior of the St. Margaret's Hospital, brought her co-operation and made available the services of her personnel. Activities such as needle work, knitting and alike were added to the program. The Men's Study Club was to function as part of the Advisory School Board. At the meeting on the 21st of February, Father R. HARAMBURU, Superior of the Fort Resolution Mission, outlined his views on Vocational training, and made suggestions accordingly. He was then preaching the annual retreat to the Oblates and Grey Nuns. Brother O. LESSARD missed it as he returned only on the 19th from his vacation. Brother J. LAPLANTE had been confined to bed on account of a sciatic illness. Brother TURCOTTE, who cumulated most material functions, was called to assist the Petcal Oil Co. with the Mission D2 tractor for hauling oil to their camp some 40 miles West of the Settlement. He made two trips towards the end of February.

1954.

Several projects of all sorts were in the limelight in 1954, for the benefit of the community and surrounding district. The District Administrator, Mr. L. A. C. O. HUNT visited Simpson on the 23rd of February in view of choosing a site for a future Doctor's residence. He conferred with the Superior for the purchase of a parcel of land owned by the Mission, but ultimately made an option for a location at the West boundary of lot 14 owned by the R.C.M.P. Mr. HUNT agreed then to recommend the allotment of a strip of land on that lot for a prospective road allowance, in continuation of the back-road, ending there in front of the church. He ordered afterwards the moving of the Game Warden's residence back some yards, for the road allowance at that location. The recommendation was ignored however by the Department of Health and Welfare and the residence was built exactly on the spot where the road allowance could have been made. In later years, when the Government purchased a strip of land along the East boundary of lot 19 for a road allowance, a redressment of the back-road had to be made along the respective boundaries of lots 12 and 17 to avoid the sharp turn at that spot. (32) The new 66' road along the West boundaries of lots 14 and 15 may not be completed before 1960, when funds are made available for its construction.

A long desired project favoured by Father FEUVRIER was the moving of the Fort Wrigley population to a new site at Justice Creek, some 30 miles above the Mackenzie River. Mr. A. COTTRELL, Indian Agent, gave his approval on the 5th of February 1954. Father FEUVRIER requested the approval of the transfer from the Minister responsible for Indian Affairs, the Hon. PICKERSGILL in October of that year. (33) In the meantime, he wrote profusely on the project. (34) The Hudson's Bay Co. were apparently indifferent to the move, since they operated their trading business at a loss. The Vicar Apostolic showed little interest in the transfer of the Mission. A portion of the population of Wrigley wanted a day school for their children. Mr. A. COTTRELL, their Agent, requested it for them. Father FEUVRIER continued to hope in the possibility of the change, as he was convinced of its advantages and benefits.

In March and April, Father LIZE travelled to Rabbit-Skin-River and Jean-Marie-River as usual and also down the Mackenzie River and as far as Sibbeston Lake. Winter travelling by the missionaries was coming to an end, as most Indians living in scattered camps, except Jean-Marie-River, were spending longer periods in the Settlement. More of their children were attending the Boarding School. Thus, religious instruction and the administration of the Sacraments to this portion of the flock were better taken care of.

The economic conditions of the Indians had deteriorated in recent years, while social conditions were undergoing many changes. Slightly more than 50 % of the population were of Indian Status, and most of them had lived in scattered camps most part of the years. A decline in the price and quantity of game and fur compelled a percentage of them to gradually settle down in town. As the personnel of the Mission had made a survey and study of the situation, they published, on the 31st of May, a brief summary of their views on the problems. Their suggestions covered three main fields: (first) an increased fishing in near-by lakes during the fall and winter; (second) an increased production of cattle for meat supply; (third) more boarding facilities and a manual training course for the youth. - Another study was made of the Jean-Marie-River conditions by Father LIZE, which was published at the same time. (34 A)

In May of that year 1954, Brother J.M. TURCOTTE went to the Sibbeston saw-mill to undertake the cutting of logs with employees and to assist in sawing lumber for the Mission. When the job was completed, the 35-year old Brother considered seriously discontinuing his services at the Mission and asked to return to his family. He departed from Simpson on the 2nd of June, leaving behind him a reputation of a capable and hard worker, as well as of a good religious man. - Brother LAPLANTE began in June the enlargement and reshaping of the old barn. In July he was busy at the preparatory work for installing a high pressure steam boiler and new laundry machines. Towards the end of the month, he was digging a and building a small basement at the rear of the Hospital and an addition behind the boiler room for cool storage places.

At Jean-Marie-River, the newly built Day School welcome its first Government teacher on June 3rd, Mr. Fr. DODICK, who had been engaged for the summer season only. Towards the end of August, Mr. DODICK made application for the teaching during the whole school year, but was refused since another teacher had applied for the function. When the latter changed her mind, Mr. DODICK was asked by the Department to take her place, but refused then. The post remained vacant

for the second school year. A year before, Mrs. S. DAGENAIS of Yellowknife had spent only a few days teaching at the school and hurried out by air to Yellowknife on the 18th of October. (35)

A large group of Indians met in the St. Margaret's School on the 18th of July to confer on their many problems. Among other decisions taken, one was to request saw-mill equipment from their Department. Another was for assistance in fishing expedition to neighbouring lakes. They discussed also Vocational Training for their youth, and approved of sending some boys to the Fort Resolution School where some training of that sort was provided. They also prepared a petition to the Government for the erection on the Island of a Boarding School to meet the needs of the school population of the surrounding district. At Treaty time however, no mention had been made by those Indians of their demand for a Boarding School. However, one of them laid a complaint to the Agent that the youth returning for the Residential School was inapt to the life of hunter and trapper. (36) His remarks were ignored by all present, because most Indians understood then the increasing need of at least a primary education for all their children.

Fort Simpson was honored with the visit of high Government Officials who arrived on the 31st of July. They were the new Minister of Northern Affairs, the Hon. Jean LESAGE, his Deputy Minister Mr. G. ROBERTSON, and assistant Mr. LAMONTAGNE, the Federal Member of Parliament Mr. Merv. HARDIE, and Mr. STEAD of the Justice Department. The Officials were on a tour of inspection and study of the conditions in the Mackenzie, for future development of the country. At a public meeting held in the evening, the Minister and his Deputy Minister delivered an address. Mr. J.W. GOODALL introduced and thanked them.

At the Mission, we witnessed on the 24th of August, the return of Brother A. VACHON, who was given shortly after the contract of digging and installing a sewage disposal line from the Fathers' residence. - The new teacher, Mr. M. GALLANT Mrs. GALLANT and son had arrived on the 20th of that month. Thirty children registered at the St. Margaret's School on September 1st. Twenty-one went to the Residential School at Providence. One girl went to the Nurse's aide School at Fort Smith, and one boy to the Vocational School at Fort Resolution.

Events of the year 1954 pointed out the important developments in the making at and for Fort Simpson. Aware of their importance, the Superior had wanted to acquaint himself better with the situations by visiting the Jean-Marie-River Settlement on the 1st of August, and Fort Providence from the 24th of Aug. till the 8th of September. Moreover, he left by canoe for Fort Liard on the 20th with Father FEUVRIER as a captain and engineer, to confer with Father LECOAT on common problems and projects. The trip at that time of the year was no less than "hair raising" for the Superior who happens to be the writer of this story. We conferred at Nahanne, on the 30th, with Mr. G. KRAUSS and the Indian families, and we reached Fort Liard on the 2nd of October. For two days, we studied our problems with the Director of the Mission and a number of Indians. A conference with the local H.B.Co. Manager and the R.C.M. Police completed our program. And I had reached then two conclusions relative to the educational matters. There was an unanimous agreement of opinion in favour of a Day School in the Settlement. Second, the Mission, the Hudson's Bay and the Indians present there, approved of a Boarding School at Fort Simpson, where the children from scattered camps could receive their education. Corporal LINDSAY of the R.C.M.P. voiced highly the need of a local Hostel and a marked opposition to a central Boarding School at

Fort Simpson. He emphasized what he called the "inhumane" treatment forced on a child to leave his parents and be away from his own people and environment. Further, the Corporal claimed that his own children had a right to a school in the Settlement, and was prepared to recommend the serving of rations to the families willing to stay in town so that their children might attend a day school. This latter policy appeared at variance with that of the other R.C.M.P.s. As for the other views, they only confirmed what we knew long ago about the presumed evils of the Boarding School system. (37) The dissenting voice tinkling in our ears when we left Fort Liard on the 5th of October had completely died out once we passed the rapids at a speed which was "hair raising", and we had a cold bath below one of them. When from afar I glanced at Fort Simpson, which I thought I would never see again, I thanked and blessed Father FEUVRIER for having taken me back safely and enriched with more experience of unequal value.

The minds were then in gestation on the Island. (38) On the day following the celebration of the Armistice, a public gathering discussed and voted for the erection of a Government owned and operated Day School of undenominational character at Fort Simpson, and of one Hostel of the same character. (39) The three Catholics present abstained from casting their vote. On the 19th of December, a public meeting of the Catholic population pronounced in favour of maintaining a system of education in accordance with the principles and practices of their Church. A petition was then prepared for circulation among Catholics only, requesting the Government to respect and maintain their rights in the proposed new educational facilities. (40) Those and other events pertaining to the general history of Simpson have their place in this chapter, although they will be reviewed separately in the last.

1955.

The Town was then on the verge of a boom. The Pastors of the Sacred Heart Mission were prepared for the challenge in their own field and sounded the warning in early 1955 against a flop in morality "in order to make of this town a better place to live in." (41) The members of the Catholic Women's League kept active in the fall and throughout the winter. Card parties had been added in their program to provide entertainment to all classes of the population. The executive members of the Advisory School Board, who observed the movements of the community life, were attentive to the welfare of Catholic education, and to the interests of the Catholic portion of the population in and around Fort Simpson. Reports published by Messrs R. CHENIER, S. BYER and M. GALLANT in the Catholic Voice are indications of the work being done. (42)

Father FEUVRIER arrived from Wrigley on the 12th of January for the annual retreat being preached by Father PICARD of Fort Chipewyan. The 'forgotten' missionary reported mixed results in his pastoral duties. Father LIZE, who had been at Jean-Marie-River, brought back on the 14th of January the assurance that the "Sacred Fire" was kept alive in the isolated portion of the flock. On the 26th, the Superior took off for Edmonton in need of dental care. While at Smith, he sought pastoral directives from the Episcopal authority in the interest of the Mission and of the Catholic population. In February, the Mission's Plane having failed to haul the fish supplies from Spruce Lake due to unfavourable landing conditions, Brother J. LAPLANTE undertook the hauling by land with our D-2 tractor and two large bob-sleighs. He started on the 15th on the old 'tractor road'

with Father FEUVRIER as a guide and chaplain. G. VILLENEUVE and D. McPHERSON went along as his assistants, as they were travelling day and night. The whole trip lasted 8 days. Father FEUVRIER continued by dogs from Spruce Lake to Wrigley. On the 25th, Brother LAPLANTE, G. VILLENEUVE and Ant. ANTOINE started for a second trip and they returned on the 2nd of March. They had hauled 4 tons of fish without accident, but they felt that the risks had been many and they rejoiced over their successful adventure. When Father FEUVRIER returned by air from Wrigley on the 19th, he expressed the opinion that hauling by air was the only reliable means of securing the fish supply for the Hospital. Both communities of Oblates and Grey Nuns gathered around him, on the feast of the Annunciation, to celebrate the 25 years of his priesthood. The Missionary had been compelled to rest at the Hospital for a few days, but he departed again on the 5th of April for a 6-week stay among his people at Wrigley.

We relate here beforehand, the last months of Father FEUVRIER's career in our midst and in the Mackenzie. He sailed down from Simpson on the 26th of May and landed at Justice Creek to do the preparatory work for the construction of his proposed new residence, thence continued to his Mission. Early in June, a few Indians from Wrigley reported to the Superior at Fort Simpson that, in their own opinion, Father FEUVRIER was growing seriously ill. They had observed in his daily contact short spells of dizziness. The TALEs had also mentioned, that earlier in the winter the priest suffered short spells of dizziness, as he travelled by dogs between Spruce and Fish Lakes on his way to Fort Wrigley. And more recently, an Indian reported having seen him not well at Justice Creek. Alerted by such reports, I immediately wrote to him, asking more information on his health and offering him the help of one of our Brothers if he wished. His reply indicated that the reports were false and he declined any assistance. Further, he warned me, that some Indians of dubious respectability were trying to damage his reputation, stating specific accusations of thefts against one of them. (43) On the 24th of June, the Priest was standing near the H.B.Co. store in the afternoon, while the treaty Party was going on. Suddenly, he collapsed to the ground. Doctor NYHUS present at the Treaty was called immediately, and considering the situation serious, asked by telegram for my permission to fly him to Simpson immediately. Brought unconscious to the Hospital, the sick Priest remained in that state all night and the next day, while he had been flown by the Mission's plane to the General Hospital at Edmonton. On the 3rd day, he recovered consciousness and improved slowly for some weeks. The medical faculty, although uncertain of the cause of the illness, declared the Priest unfit to return to the North. Three years of rest and treatments having proved unsatisfactory, Father FEUVRIER was sent to France, where he continues to 'live in mind' with us. Besides saying his Holy Mass daily and observing the religious obligations, he performs divers functions. We note in particular the writing of a long report on his former Mission of Fort Wrigley. (44) Now in his 54th year of age, Father FEUVRIER hopes to see Simpson and Wrigley again, leaving all things, however, into the hands of God. Meanwhile, he offers his sacrifices and prayers for our Mission and the Missions, in the hope that his former flock may remain faithful Christians. (44)

Back at the Sacred Heart Mission, we find Father F. MOISAN completely paralysed in March 1955. Having been unconscious for several days, he passed away on Holy Thursday, April 7, at 8,00 am in the presence of Father LIZE. The good shepherd then completed an apostolic career of 50 years in and around Fort Simpson. His whole life may be summed up in two words: Sacrifice and Charity.

Father LIZE took off for Fort Providence on the 7th of June to assist the lone Father DENIS. Brother LAPLANTE went aboard the Y.T.C.L. boat on the 20th with the material for construction of the house at Justice Creek. The work was completed within a month. Then Father FEUVRIER became ill, and his new residence was never occupied. Father LIZE went down to Fort Wrigley on the 1st of July with Brother LAPLANTE to put order at the Mission left unexpectedly by the Director. And this was the last travel of Father LIZE as Assistant at the Sacred Heart Mission. He departed for his new post at Fort Liard on the 19th of September permuting with Father LECOAT of that Mission. The 40-year old missionary bid farewell to Simpson with regret, as he was to find ample opportunities of self-sacrifices at the lonely St. Raphael's Mission. Father LECOAT was not a new comer on this Island, since his first obedience in 1937 was for Fort Simpson. He arrived on the 24th of that month to assist the Superior and to be the Pastor of the Fort Wrigley Mission. A fluent speaker in the Slavy language, the 44-year old priest went down by canoe to make contact with his new flock. The judicious Pastor reported in November that conditions were not all good there and mentioned in particular the miserable condition of the antiquated residence.

Conditions at Jean-Marie-River warranted a suitable residence for the priest who lived among the population off and on during the year. In the course of a visit there on the 8th of September, arrangements were made by the Superior for the construction of a 14' by 14' log building for that purpose. A second trip on the 7th of October convinced him that the house was hardly suitable for the winter. However, it had been gradually completed, so that religious instruction and services could be held there.

On the Island, life run at a slightly increased tempo, as impending development of divers sorts urged groups in the Settlement to sponsor and organize activities of their own. In the Catholic field, The St. Margaret's School reopened with 26 pupils taught again by Mr M. GALLANT. His function as teacher to the Hospital patients had been taken over then by a new comer, Miss M. ROHERTY. - Corporal BYER delivered an address on "The Sense Of Responsibility" at a public meeting of the new Parent-Teacher Association, on the 24th of October. (47) - Another by Mr. R. CHENIER on "School History In Canada" had been delivered previously in August. (48) - The C.W.L. ladies conducted a rummage sale in November for the benefit of the needy. - An unusual practice was introduced during that month at the St. Margaret's School, as a group of young Catholics insisted on holding weekly dances. The experiment was tolerated, on the condition that adult supervision be made each time. It proved afterwards to be unpopular and the practice was discontinued.

1956.

The new year 1956 dawned under remarkable auspices. On the 3rd, a fire burnt to the ground the old barn that had been restored and enlarged only a few months before. (49) While the fire was still raging, the pupils of the St. Margaret's School and their teacher were taking possession of the new class-room at the Federal Day School. At 3:30 p.m., the Superior blessed the new facilities and the whole class in the presence of Mrs. CHENIER and C. LAFFERTY. The official opening ceremony took place on the 5th at 8:00 p.m., and was attended by a large number of persons. Cpl S. BYER presided over the ceremony sponsored jointly by the Home And School Association and the Parent-Teacher Association. The program

opened by the cutting of the ribbon by Mr. W. DAY who presented then the keys of the Catholic wing to Mr. M. GALLANT. After the singing of "O Canada", the chairman introduced the speakers with his usual ability. Mrs. CHENIER stressed the role of the parents in education and urged them to co-operate with the teachers. Mr. GALLANT emphasized the influence of the home training on the school work and the efforts required by the pupils to acquire learning and education. Mr. BLEILLER expressed first his regret over the failure to amalgamate the two school units and went on saying that he hoped nevertheless in the functioning on a friendly basis. Mrs. J. CREE insisted on the role of the Home and School Association and on the importance of regular attendance at school by the children. Chief B. GAZON spoke in both English and Slavy, stressing the influence of the family on the progress at School. After pointing out that it is hard without education today, however, he remarked that education is not necessary to raise a child properly. Mr. GAZON insisted that the Natives should have the same education as the White. "If you love really your children," said he, "send your children to school and send them on time." While he regretted that his own school years had been too few, he rejoiced over the opportunities offered now to our youth for a better and higher education. Mr. J. GILBEY, President of the Home and School Association, voiced the pleasure of all over the opening of the Catholic wing and thought that this was a great day in the development of education at Fort Simpson. He observed that one who regards educational history knows that teaching is a controversial matter. But it should not disturb us when parents and all do their best for the common good. Mr. GILBEY concluded that education is or should be a child's right but for many it might be their Salvation.

Elsie NORWEGIAN, a grade-4 pupil, presented a souvenir to Mr. GALLANT on behalf of his pupils. A letter of thanks to the Commissioner was approved and signed by the two secretaries of the Associations. "God save the Queen" brought the ceremony to a close. A tape-recording of the whole program has been made by Mr. R. WARD. Mr. J. HARDISTY served as interpreter in the Slavy language. (50) This was the finest example of co-operation in support of education in the whole community, but unfortunately, the struggle around the type of school in the settlement has not as yet found a common basis of mutual understanding between the promoters of divergent educational philosophies.

January 31st of that year 1955, brought unexpectedly the Rev. Father J. ADAM to assist the Superior of the Sacred Heart Mission. Nearing 50 years and with 20 years of missionary work mainly among the Eskimos, the socius had been broken to all tasks. A native of Carlsbourg, Belgium, Father ADAM served only 5 months in our midst, as he was to leave for a vacation in his country. - A compatriot, the young Father H. POSSET, was to take his place two months later. He arrived also unexpectedly alone by canoe from Fort Providence on the 10th of August. In his prime maturity at the age of 31 years, Father POSSET offered a variety of talents in an earnest need of exertion. Opportunities will not fail him.

The Sacred Heart Mission had become a center of attraction then: the fact is that Father A. ROBIN of Fort Good Hope had chosen to take up residence at Fort Simpson. He too arrived unexpectedly on the 28th, with instruction to take good care of his health and spare his 70 years.

On the farm, the new barn was completed in the fall to replace the one abandoned on the lot purchased by the Government for the new school unit. A water line from the Hospital to the Mission was put in operation. The grainery

was hauled to its new location on lot 19 on the 18th of October. Cement foundation for a new chicken house was also completed then. This construction had been necessitated by the transfer to the Government of the land on which the buildings were located. - Brother LESSARD, who had been operator of the Mission's Electric D.C. power plant for several years, found himself relieved of half of his tasks, on the 23rd of October, when the new Central Electric System began to supply power to the Mission. On the 15th of November, the D.C. power was completely abandoned, when the Hospital was hooked on the distribution system. By that time, the old D.C. power plant was almost wrecked and was not regretted by its henceforth unemployed operator. (51) - Brother VACHON, who had perspired all summer digging a new water well at the back of the Hospital, began framing it on the 17th of November. Incidentally, the two other Brothers and Monsieur GAILLARD were then confined to bed for minor sores, leaving Brother VACHON alone for a while, with all the worries of the maintenance jobs. One of them had been the hauling from the airport and the storing in the refrigerator 7 tons of frozen beef brought from Hay-River by air by an Associated Airways Bristol freighter.

The colorful event of the year-end was the showing at the St. Margaret's Hall, on December 28th, of the movie film "The Robe" in Cinemascope. It was the first of a series of Cinemascope films which the people of Simpson were fortunate to see in this remoted northern town.

1957 - 1958 : THE LAST TWO YEARS OF THE CENTURY.

As we are drawing to a close of this period of history of the Sacred Heart Mission, we deem it expedient to pass over several minor events and cast a glance only at the others which stamped the last two years of its centennial life.

Since his coming to Simpson, in the fall 1955, Father LECOAT ministered mainly among the Catholic population of Fort Wrigley. Except for occasional priestly functions carried on on the Island, he resided at his lone Mission. The latter was replaced in the summer 1957 by a new one built under the direction of Brother LAROQUE. Since his arrival here in 1956, Father POSSET continued the functions of assistant as his predecessors either on the Island or abroad by travelling in the winter and summer for the spiritual care of the scattered Indians. Mention should be made too that the Superior went to Fort Providence in early June 1957, as Father LECOAT did in February-March 1956 to assist the Superior for a number of weeks in the various functions which he was alone to discharge. As for Father ROBIN, his services were also required at Fort Providence on the 3rd of September 1957 for a period of 10 months, after which he returned to Simpson for the celebration of the Centenary of this Mission in August 1958. Home sick, as we presume, the venerable missionary took off again for his former Mission towards the end of August, but only for a period of three months, since his Bishop instructed him then to go back to Simpson for medical attention at the Hospital. (52)

The occasion of the annual retreat brought to the Sacred Heart Mission missionaries of the neighbouring Settlements and offered them as well as to the personnel, fruitful contacts for both the pastoral and religious duties of all. For the 1957 retreat, preached in January by Father J. DENIS Superior of Providence, Father A. BINAME and Brother CLAEYS from Fort Norman and Father LIZE from Liard.

THE LATREILLE BROS.



Brother Henri

Brother Philippe

Brother Médard



Bro. O. Lessard



Bros. A. Vachon & J. Laplante



Br. H. Sarreault

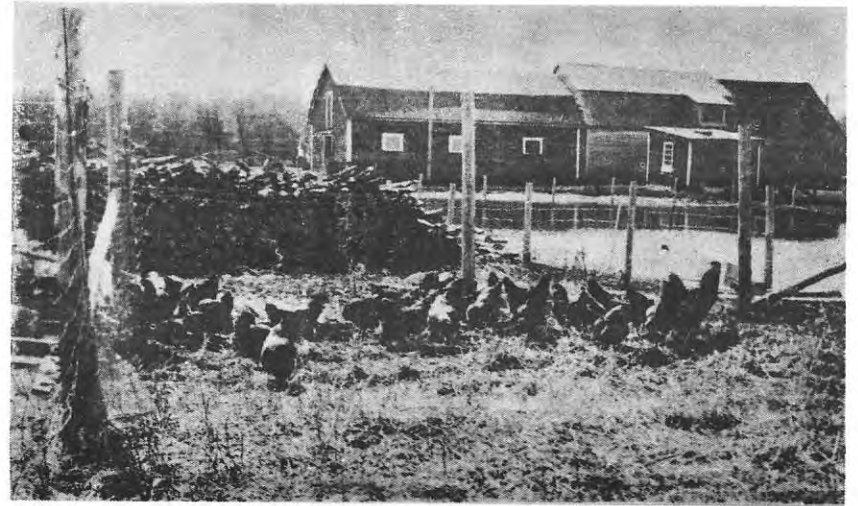


Br. H. Tesnière

On the Farm



Pat. Villeneuve 1945



1946



Brs. Laplante and Gosselin—Patrice 1947



Br. Laplante . . . along the Liard R. 1953



1946

came to attend the spiritual exercises. - For the 1958 retreat, preached by Father BUCHAUSSOIS of Fort Rae, it was the turn of Fathers DESSY and MARY of Hay-River and Fort Liard respectively, to attend it in January. Brother LARQUE also was in the group, as he returned from Liard then, on his way to Fort Wrigley.

An intimate ceremony gathered the Oblates and the Grey Nuns on the 7th of April 1957, for the celebration of the Superior's Silver Jubilee of his priesthood. For the latter, a vacation was due for the visit of his relatives after nine years, and also for a refreshment of spirit and vigor in the "civilization". April 9th was the "D" day, and soon came "V" day on August 4th.

By that time, Monsieur GAILLARD, the devoted layman who had worked at the Mission for 5 years, had gone to Fort Chipewyan. - Mr. A. PASKELL, teacher at the Catholic section of the Federal Day School, and his family, had also bid farewell to Simpson on the 30th of June 1957. - Miss MCKINNES, another good Irish lady from the Green Erin, came in September to replace Mr. PASKELL. - And we must not overlook the other authentic Irish man from the Old Country, Mr. D. LAVIN who landed on the Island on the first of that month to teach school at Jean-Marie-River.

On the Mission premisses, a new building completed in late winter for a twin refrigerating unit, had one of them set in operation on the 19th of March 1957. The new 10-ton freezer operated by a 2 H.P. electric motor replaced the old cooler operated by a D.C. electric motor, which had caused Brother LESSARD much worries in recent years.

The transfer to the Government of 10 acres of cultivated and occupied land by the Mission, out of a total of 23 acres, compelled the Superior to clear other parcels of land on the Mission premisses. By anticipation, some 5 acres of treed land on lots 18 and 20 were cleared in 1955 and 1956. Brother LAPLANTE broke most of it in 1957, while a portion of the new land was ploughed and sowed in the spring, and the remaining part in 1958. - By that time, Brother M. TURGEON was added to the personnel of the Sacred Heart Mission. The 41-year old Oblate, a native of Drummondville, P.Qu., had worked for the Mackenzie Mission since 1942 first at McMurray and thence at Fort Smith. He arrived from that latter place on the 17th of September 1957. Within a month the handy coadjutor had completed the installation of lavatories in the Rectory. Having charge of the operation of machines, equipment, etc., at and around the Hospital, Brother TURGEON was granted a certificate of boiler-operator by Inspector Clark in 1958. After the departure of Brother LAPLANTE in August of that year, he performed various functions, such as farming, hauling and sawing wood and sundries. It was a sort of an oddity for the people of Simpson to no longer see Brother LAPLANTE around, after they had observed his whereabouts for 23 years. Crippled with rheumatism and sciatic fever in the legs, the 45-year old Brother needed a rest and a change of occupation. Acres of cultivated land and several buildings bear witness of his ability and activities on the Mission premisses. When he sailed aboard the Sant' Anna, on the 18th of August 1958, regrets filled his heart, but the satisfaction of the work done must have filled up too his devoted soul. After a 3-month vacation, Brother LAPLANTE was sent to the St. Joseph Mission at Fort Resolution.

Since the fall 1957, Brother VACHON was concerned almost exclusively with the raising and care of chicks and hens, boasting up the production of eggs as he built a new poultry house. Although a 4-month holiday had started on the 12th of September, he continued afterwards his activities in aviculture, and caught up with what may be called an absorbent task. (54)

Fishing at Spruce Lake initiated in 1953 by Father FEUVRIER had continued until this day. Under the supervision of Father LECOAT since 1955, the TALES and Boots have put up some 3000 two-pound fish dressed each November, which was hauled by air afterwards.

A problem was raised to the Mission authority in 1955, when the Government proposed the purchase of lot 17, on which the cemetery was located. A first proposal submitted to and approved by the Mission, was that all remains buried therein should be removed and re-interred at a new location. (56) However, when Government Officials learned that 400 bodies had been buried since 1916, a second proposal was agreed upon whereby the existing cemetery should be fenced and kept properly by and at the cost of the Government. (57) By that time, rumors of all sorts had circulated among a portion of the population pretending that removal of the dead was violating the norms of both public hygiene, relative privileges and respect for the dead, In the latter case, fear and superstition about the dead prompted the objections raised by a large number of persons. In the other case, it was ignorance of the fact that the Mission alone owns the cemetery and is granted a permit to inter or remove bodies. As for the danger of germ dissemination, they are excluded by the severe precautions enforced by public authorities. At any rate, the Commissioner of the N.W.T., Mr. G. ROBERTSON, and his advisers motivated their second decision on reasons of the high cost of removal, not on the puerile objections raised by that portion of the local population. (58)

Another problem faced by the Superior in recent years, is of the sale and lease of parcels of land to the many applicants in need of a suitable site for a home. In 1957-58, eleven lots have been legally transferred to their occupants (59), nine others to public authorities, while 6 new parcels of land have been leased to applicants. In addition to that land covering an area of some 28 acres disposed of by the Mission for the benefit of the local population other parcels of land have been allotted for public road. (60) It is worthy of note that there are other lands unused on the Island which could be allotted to those in need of a site for their home and business premisses. Since the whole cleared area of land owned by the Mission is cultivated and in full use, (61) it would be unfair to anyone to charge the Mission authorities with a monopoly of occupation, detrimental to the best interest of the people.

IN THE VINEYARD OF THE LORD,

A slight increase in the reception of the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, as well as in the regular attendance at the Sunday Mass has been observed in the last two years. Perhaps this is an indication of a better observance of God's laws and of his Church by a portion of the flock. On the other hand, there is no secret in the fact that a small percentage of baptized local Catholics do not live up to their religious faith or are regular offenders of Christian morality. It might be rightly said that the "good" are getting better, while the "bad" are getting worse. As for the "lukewarm", they may

be stamped with a question mark (?) - The birth rate among the Catholic population in the past two years, has averaged 15, and is equivalent to the number of baptisms, while two marriages only have been performed. - There had been 4 deaths and 4 funerals during 1957-1958. The first burial in the new cemetery located along the South-West boundaries of lot 19, had been made on the 29th of September 1957. - The largest number of children receiving religious instruction has been recorded in 1958 either at the local school or at Fort Providence, totalling 89 from grade one to grade nine inclusive, compared to 40 in 1953. (62) - Two adults have been received into the Church in 1957-58, while two others have been given religious instruction for mixed marriages. - Pastoral visits at Jean-Marie-River have been made regularly by Father POSSET in the winter by air and by dog-team and in the summer by canoe. Perhaps it is correct to assume that travelling by dog-team in the winter by the missionaries has come to an end, since air service available is faster and less costly. The long and exhausting trips made by the Missionaries of Fort Wrigley have also happily ended. Since his arrival in 1955, Father LECOAT has travelled by air to and from Wrigley in the winter and occasionally also in the summer. Visits to Indian camps along the Mackenzie River below Simpson and in the Wrigley area, are no longer needed since most people reside in that settlement the largest portion of the year. The long and "killing" winter trips made by Father FEUVRIER to and from the lakes East of Wrigley for fishing expedition are no longer required since 1953, when a suitable source of fish supply has been chosen at Spruce Lake. As we have noted earlier, the missionary charged with the spiritual care of the Fort Wrigley Catholic population, has taken up residence in that settlement for the past 2 years. Although the Wrigley Mission has no religious status separated from that of the Sacred Heart Mission, its pastoral register and census are kept separately, as well as the temporal and financial administrations. (63)

THE MEMORABLE CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENARY.

The main event of the year 1958 has been the celebration of the Sacred Heart Mission Centenary, from August 15th to 19th. At the end of the feasts held at that occasion, and following his very last visit at Fort Simpson that lasted 8 days, the late Bishop TROCELLIER, Vicar Apostolic, said it had been a success. As he bid farewell to the Superior, His Lordship declared: "You have had very nice feasts."

On the first day, the Jubilee opened with the celebration of the Assumption High Mass, and was followed in the afternoon by a concert given by the children under the direction of Sister PEDNEAULT, for the children of the town. On the 16th, a First Communion ceremony took place in the morning, while in the afternoon a solemn procession from the church to the new Crotto of Lourdes, on the Hospital grounds, highlighted the celebration. Consecration of all the children to the Blessed Virgin Mary ended in the church. - Sunday 17th, the 100th birth day of the Sacred Heart Mission, had been set for the Solemn Pontifical High Mass by Bishop TROCELLIER, assisted by the escort of priests and servers and performed with the impressive liturgical rites. His Lordship delivered the befitting sermon on that unique occasion. In the evening, the St. Margaret's Hall was the scene of the concert given by the children to the whole population. Addresses were made by the representatives of the different authorities, who paid tribute to the founders and builders of the Sacred Heart Mission

The Sacraments of Marriage and Confirmation were honored on Monday by the celebration of a Mass for two couples who celebrated their Golden Jubilee of Marriage, and by the administration of Confirmation to ten children by Bishop TROCELLIER, which was followed by the renewal of the promises of Baptism by all those present at the ceremony. An open air banquet gathered a crowd in the evening and a fire crackers display heightened the jubilation of all in the night.

Ceremonies for the faithful departed during the century began with a Requiem High Mass in the morning of Tuesday 19th and ended with an impressive visit at the cemetery, where the presence of 400 bodies awaiting for the day of resurrection, brought to mind the eternal truths of our Holy Religion.

Instructions and addresses appropriate to each ceremony and gathering were delivered throughout the five days of the Jubilee. Several visitors from other Missions joined with the people of Simpson to celebrate the glory of the pastors and their flocks in the course of the century, and to thank God for the good done in this community. Moving pictures in color have been taken at the various ceremonies and gatherings to serve as a reminder of the 1958 Jubilee of the Sacred Heart Mission. - The Grotto, a representation of the apparitions of Mary Immaculate to St. Bernadette at Lourdes, was blessed during the feasts, and remains as a token of our devotion to the Mother of Our Blessed Lord. The construction of the grotto had been completed in that summer 1958 under the direction of Brother TUGEON. The design was the artistic work of Father POSSET, while it had been the realization of a promise made by the respective Superiors of the Mission and Hospital in 1954.

After the relation of the events and demonstrations of the centenary of the Sacred Heart Mission, ^{the writer} feels like those who bid farewell to Simpson after the celebrations, in leaving behind him the reality to go away with wonderful and edifying remembrances. Yet, our work has only been half done and there remains to relate in more details a brief history of the allied institutions of the Sacred Heart Mission: namely the St. Margaret's Hospital and the School.

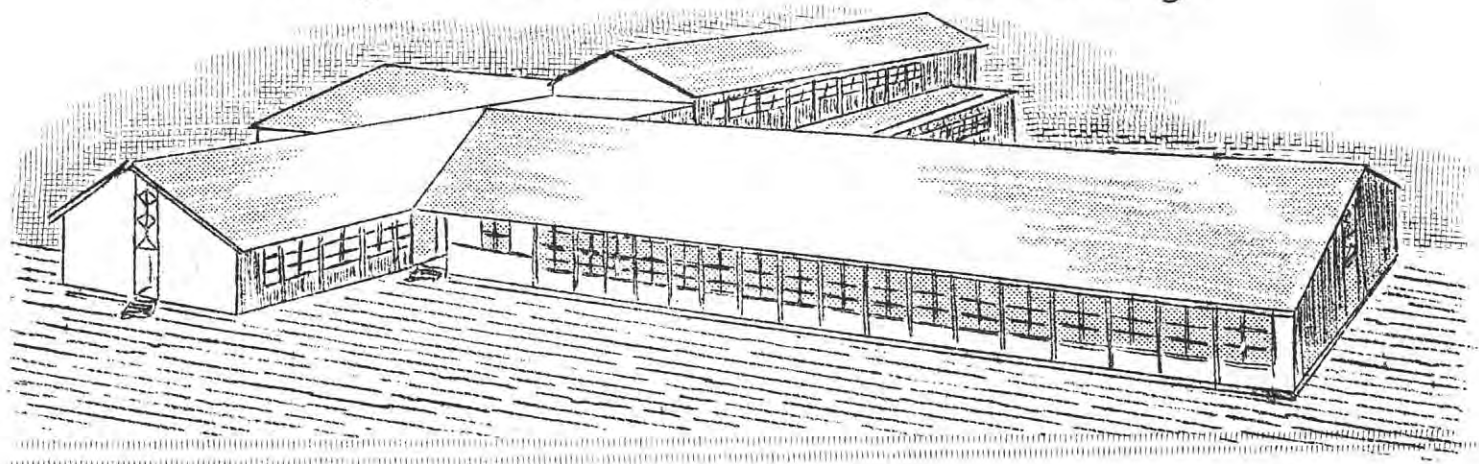
Towards the end of 1958, the personnel of the Mission had been reduced since the departure of Father ROBIN and Brother LAPLANTE. Moreover, Father H. POSSET, who ministered in the North for 8 years, was entitled to a holiday and a first visit to his parents. He took off on the 30th of August for Edmonton and thence flew via the Polar Route to Belgium. - Brother VACHON too, went off for a needed vacation in September. - Thus at the Mission then, we felt like the Apostles on the day of Ascension of Our Lord, sad and wishing to leave also.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW CENTRAL SCHOOL UNIT STARTED.

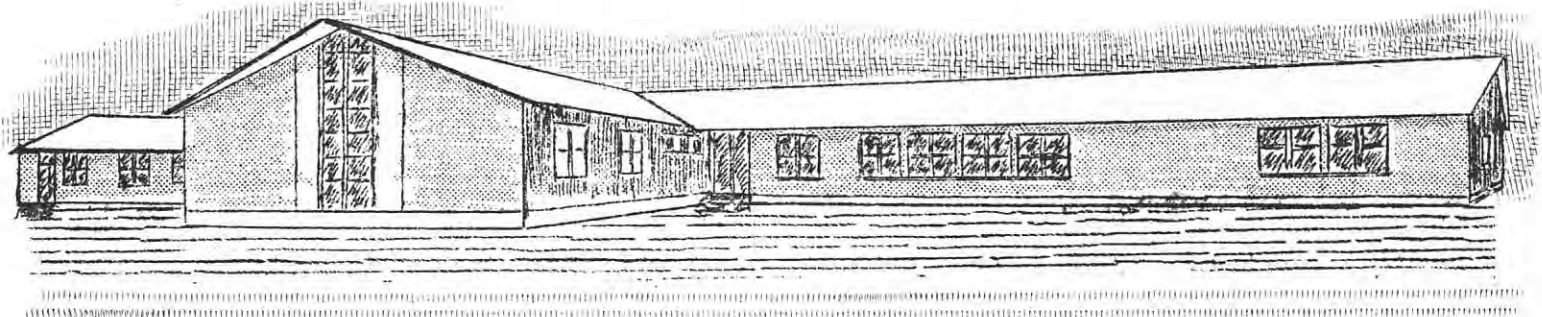
However, life continued almost as usual on the Island, except for some excitement when the contractors began the construction of the new Central School Unit in early September. Perspectives of the buildings may be seen on next page. The drawing has been made by Father POSSET from the originals provided by the Federal Department of Public Works. The beginning of the erection of the new school and Hostels marked the beginning of a new era in the educational life of Fort Simpson and surrounding districts.

FORT SIMPSON CENTRAL SCHOOL UNIT

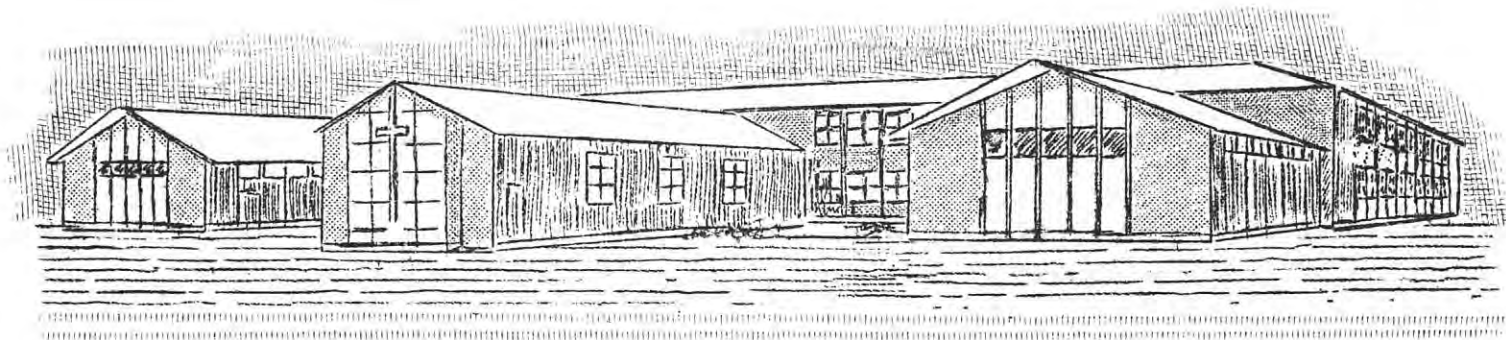
Day Classrooms Building



Anglican Hostel



Roman Catholic Hostel



As we think over some of the events that occurred in the educational field during the past century, we bear in mind some of the hopes entertained by the pastors of the Sacred Heart Mission in the early years of its establishment. The choice of Fort Simpson as the proper location for a Boarding School had been thought by Father GROUARD and the Vicar Apostolic in the years 1860 or so. The reasons of the choice were then almost the same as they have been for the choice of the Central School Unit now under construction. But, then and afterwards, the choice had been abandoned since Fort Simpson was then a Protestant center, while Fort Providence was a Catholic center of population, who would better welcome a Catholic institution destined to gather and educate the Catholic youth of the Lower Mackenzie. The cruelty of the events is that Fort Simpson will at least for a decade supercede Fort Providence in gathering and educating the Catholic youth of the Lower Mackenzie. Reasons of common and higher "good" has justified the decision of the public authorities, and perhaps the people of Fort Providence might regret now some indifference and neglect on the part of the parents to make full use of the educational facilities available for their children in their midst for the past half century. In the opinion of the writer, the Fort Providence Residential School would have been enlarged at least a decade ago, if all local children had flocked into the school from grade 1 to 12 every year. Hence, in our opinion again, as events seem to justify, the project of establishing residential school facilities at Fort Simpson to include the children of Fort Providence could not have been justified nor thought of. In any case, the project undertaken in 1958 and that caused some excitement on the Island and abroad, was a "modus vivendi" accepted by the Mission authority as an unavoidable minimum of implementation of Catholic educational rights. When the announcement was made by the Government 4 years ago, we were of the opinion that the combined system of schools is "giving temporarily fair justice, although it may not give complete satisfaction to every one." (65) Perhaps we could have called it a "mixed-marriage". In the Mission circle of the Lower Mackenzie, there have been griefs and fears over the compromise at Fort Simpson supplementating the traditional system practiced at Fort Providence during almost a century. (66)

IN CLOSING THIS CHAPTER,

We should like to state in unequivocal terms that this Mission has raised objections to the "combined system of schools" at Fort Simpson. And once the superior authorities had decided upon it, the Superior of the Sacred Heart Mission only endeavoured to secure afterwards, for the Catholic section, freedom and independence in its organization and discipline. (67) We re-iterate our convictions, based on the traditional principles and practices of the Catholic Church in educational matters, that the arrangement giving temporary fair justice shall not be a final settlement of the Catholic School problem at Fort Simpson.

A century of deeds accomplished by the Pastors of the Sacred Heart Mission and of their flocks. No miracle has been traced from the time of foundation till this day. Laborious strain, pastoral zeal and submission to God's will have been traced throughout. And the secret of the success has been, as it is the secret of the Catholic Church in her history, in the justice of her cause. Anyone from within and from without, who may be tempted to oppose her work and malign her priests or pastors and faithful members might well take note of the advice given by Gamaliel of old: "If this is the work of God, you cannot overthrow it." And those favoured with her blessings might well on bended knees say with and after Bossuet: "HAY ME TONGUE DRY UP IN MY MOUTH, MAY MY RIGHT HAND BE CUT OFF, IF EVER I SAY OR DO ANYTHING UNWORTHY OF THEE."

References

- (1) The events related in this part of the Sketch and most facts and persons mentioned have been taken from the "Diary of the Sacred Heart Mission" during that period. Others were found in "Les Annales de l'Hopital Ste. Marguerite." Special mention will be made of other sources of references.
- (2) Perhaps the ceremony had been in use previously and abandoned for a period.
- (3) Register of the Sacred Heart Mission, 1943.
- (4) Luke XIII, 34.
- (5) Annales de l'Hopital Ste. Marguerite, 1946.
- (6) Report by Mr. J. GILBEY, 19.
- (7) Gabriel SABOURIN and Bella SQUIRREL.
- (8) See Chapter 3, pages 115 - 116
- (9) See Chapter 3, pages 119 ss
- (10) PALSSEN to Father PHILIPPE (8-9-49) - Father PHILIPPE to PALSSEN (17-8-49)
- (11) Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER to Father PHILIPPE (25-8-1949)
- (12) Account: Father GILLES debited St Margaret's Hospital (5-5-1953) with note stating "for survey authorized by Father PHILIPPE in 1949.
- (13) 28 lots averaging 1/5 of an acre each. - Survey of Mr. H. BROWN's 3 lots covering 0.59 acre has cost \$ 44,25. The two lots leased by C. HANSEN covering 1.05 acre has cost \$ 78.75 for survey alone.
- (14) Codex Historicus, June 22, 1950, page 63.
- (15) Chapter 3 page 120
- (16) Dr. TRUESDELL had been accused to be one of the peddlers of the false rumors. When Sister PEDNEAULT protested to him personally about the falsehood, Dr. TRUESDELL declared that he would make retractions, but has not made them (Codex Hist. August 1950.)
- (17) Father PHILIPPE was present at the meeting (C. Hist. p.70)
Father PHILIPPE to Father LESAGE (28-5-1951)
- (18) Father LIZE to Father LESAGE (28-5-1951)
- (19) Father PHILIPPE to Father LESAGE (4-6-1951)
Father FEUVRIER to Father LESAGE (28-6-1951)
- (20) See Chapter 3, page 121
- (21) Confluent Whispers, No 9, June 1951, p. 1 and 2.
- (22) Mr. L. HUNTER and others favoured then a day school owned and operated by the Government and which, in their views, would be undenominational.
(Codex Hist. p.80 - Father LIZE to Father LESAGE (23-9-1951)
- (23) Codex Hist. p. 81
- (24) Codex Hist. P. 85
- (25) Father LUSSON had come to assist for three months.
- (26) Codex Hist. p. 86 - Pastoral Letter of Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER to the priests and faithful of the Mackenzie on "Catholic Education".
- (27) Codex Hist. p. 88.
- (28) At a meeting held on September 27, and presided by the wife of the Anglican Minister. Mr. JACOBSON disagreed with the conclusions of the meeting and decided to maintain the Statu quo.
- (29) Historical Sketch Part I, page 18.
- (30) Brother TURCOTTE had done the work. A miscalculation of the ground elevation resulted in the installation of the sewage that ended at the outlet some 6 feet below ground level, and would not therefore function effectively. It was abandoned.

(31) See Chapter 3, page 123

(32) Mr. L.A.C.O. HUNT to Father LESAGE (26-2-1954)

Father LESAGE to Mr. HUNT (1-3-1954)

Mr. HUNT to Father LESAGE (8-4-1954 and 26-3-1954)

The official and legal transfer of the 66' by 396' parcel of land had been executed and registered on the 30th of September 1958.

(33) Father LESAGE to Hon. J. PICKERSGILL, Minister of C.I. (28-10-1954)

(34) Father FEUVRIER, Fort Wrigley, to Father LESAGE (11-6-1954; 26-7-1954; 13-9-54)
Cath. Voice, No 30, April 1955, p. 9s.

(35) Cath. Voice, May 1954, p. 11s.

(35 A) Mrs DAGENAIS who had come with three children, had been given to understand falsely the conditions of living in that isolated place. Having realized the difficulties of relief in case of sickness during part of the year, she decided to abandon the place. The very first teacher at Jean-Marie-River had been a certain Miss CADORET prior to the construction of the Day School, and had been engaged by some altruistic society. - An Anthropologist, Mr. Mc NISH and his wife spent part of the year 1952-53 among that group of Indians.

(36) Jos. NORWEGIAN never had any schooling nor his wife. They prevented most of their children from acquiring more than a few years of school.

(37) Cpl. LINDSAY, who was opposed to sending Indian children from Liard to Providence, has been one time at least instrumental in preventing a number of them from getting there, when the Indian Agent, Mr. J. EMMS had given instruction to that effect. - Oddly enough, the LINDSAYS were transferred to Yellowknife before the opening of the Day School at Liard. When J. PARKER referred to reliable sources of stating school age figures at Liard, he might have well quoted Cpl. LINDSAY. - See Chapter 3, page 127

(38) Chapter 3, page 124

(39) Chapter 3, page 124 - Mr. J. CRAIG, local manager of the H.B.Co., in opposing Catholic institutions has been heard saying that since the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in the North, there has been troubles. The businessman was ignorant or wanted to ignore the centennial policy of his Company, that gave officially equal support to both Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches.

Letter of Mr. SUTHERLAND, Winnipeg, to X., Fort Simpson. Reference of this document may be had at the Mission, Fort Simpson, N.W.T.

(40) Father LESAGE to Hon. J. PICKERSGILL (30-8-1954)

The petition addressed to the Commissioner, Mr. G. ROBERTSON was certified and forwarded by Mr. R. BULLOCK, bearing the date of January 1st, 1955. The signatures were the following:

AINSLEY T.	GAUDRY Mrs. R.	MICHEL David	SQUIRREL V.
AINSLEY Mrs T.	HODGSON Mrs. H.	MICHEL Mrs. D.	TANKA F.
BAPTISTE Mrs J.	TRINDELL T.	MICHEL John	TANKA F. Mrs.
BULLOCK R.	TRINDELL Mrs T.	MICHEL Mrs. J.	VILLENEUVE P.
BULLOCK Mrs R.	VILLENEUVE Marg.	MARCELLIN Will,	VILLENEUVE Ed.
BYER S.	HARDISTY Mrs J.	NORWEGIAN Jos.	VILLENEUVE G.
BYER Mrs S.	KOTE Andrew	NORWEGIAN Mrs. J.	VILLENEUVE I.
GALLANT M.	KOTE Mrs. A.	SABOURIN Gab.	VILLENEUVE Jos.
GALLANT Mrs. M.	LAFFERTY Mrs. C.	SABOURIN Mrs. G.	WRIGLEY James
GAUDRY R.	KAZON G.	SQUIRREL H.	WRIGLEY Peter.

(41) Cath. Voice, No 27, Jan. 1955, p.3

(42) Cath. Voice, No 25, Nov. 1954, p.7-8 - Cath. Voice, No.27, Jan.1955, p.4

Cath. Voice, No 26, Dec. 1954, p.6 - Cath. Voice, No.28, March 1955, p.4s.

- (43) Father FEUVRIER to Father LESAGE (June 1955)
(44) Father FEUVRIER, Les Jas - France, to Father LESAGE (March 1959)
(45) " " " " (April 1959)
(46) Cath. Voice, No 35, Nov. 1955, p. 12.
(47) Cath. Voice " " p. 7
(48) Cath. Voice, No. 33, Aug.-Sept. 1955, p.8.
(49) The damage was estimated at some 3000 dollars without insurance compensation
The loss included a grain binder, a mower, new doors and windows, other machines
and material.
(50) Cath. Voice No.37, Jan. 1956, p.8-9.
(51) Cath. Voice No. 43, Sept. 1956, p.8. Three McLaren engines operating three
G.E. generators will produce the power. Each engine has a capacity of 125 H.P.
and 1200 R.P.M. Each generator: 90 Kilowatts; 1000 WK per hour; 4,160 V.
The first manager assumed his function in October: Mr. Ted. MERCREDI of Fort Smith.
(52) Father ROBIN took gravely ill on the following day, but recovered within ten
days and resumed his functions at the Mission. He departed for Fort Providence
again on the 4th of March 1959.
- (53) Edmonton to Simpson, via WATERWAYS (by railway and boat): Average: \$ 4.75
Edmonton to Simpson, via Ft. NELSON (highway and boat): Average: \$ 6.25
Edmonton to Simpson, via GRIMSHAW (highway and winter road): Average: \$ 7.00
Edmonton to Simpson, via HAY RIVER (highway and boat) : Average: \$ 4.90
(Average transportation cost of 100 lbs.)
- (54) Egg production in 1958 has been: 27,685 eggs, or 2307 dozens.
(55) Air Transportation cost: between 0.17 cents and 0.28 cents per 2-pound fish.
Winter Road Transp. Cost: Between 0.12 cents and 0.15 cents a pound.
(Transportation from Spruce Lake to Simpson)
- (56) Mr. G. ROBERTSON to Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER (4-4-1956)
Mr. G. ROBERTSON to Father LESAGE (26-4-1958)
Mr. C.L. MERRILL to Father LESAGE (26-6-1958)
Mr. C.C. JOHNSON to Father LESAGE (11-3-1958)
- (57) Mr. G. ROBERTSON to Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER (21-71-1958)
(58) Mr. W.g. BROWN to Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER (20-10-1958)
Mr. G. ROBERTSON to Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER (9-10-1958) - (25-10-1958)
- (59) Lots 52-53-54 sold to Mr. H. BROWN : Registered: 3-11-1958
Lot 55 sold to Mr. T. TRINDELL " 22-9-1958
Lot 57 sold to Mrs A. LINDBERG " 2-9-1958
Lot 58 sold to Mr. G. WILSON " 4-4-1957
Lot 59 sold to Mr. F.J. BROWNING " 4-4-1957
Lot 60 sold to Mr. H. CARLSON " 24-4-1957
Lot 61 sold to Mr. A. FAILLE " 4-4-1957
Lot 62 sold to Mr. H.C. THOMASON " 24-4-1957
Lot 63 sold to Mr. R.J. JONESZ " 4-4-1957
- (60) Lots 47-48-49- sold to N.C.Power Commission Reg.: 22-6-1956
Lot 64 sold to SPRIG PETCAL Ltd " 25-3-1957
Parcel Lot 17 sold to Her Majesty The QUEEN, " 5-3-1957
Parcel Lot 23 sold to Indian Affairs 1959
- (61) Lots 6-7-8 owned by the Anglican Mission: 22 acres
Lot 5 owned by the Hudson's Bay Co, 95 acres (a portion leased to RCSC)
Lots 2-3-4-10 owned by Indian Affairs 72 acres
Lots 23 parcel and 25 parcel " " 3 acres approximately
Lots 24-25 owned by the Exp. Farm 37 acres "
Lots 11-16-17 owned by Northern Affairs 46 acres
Lots 30-31-32-33-34-35-36 by the Crown 90 acres

(62) At the local Federal Day School:	48
At the Jean-Marie-River School:	18
At the St.Marg.Hospital School:	2
At the Fort Prov. Res. School:	21
TOTAL:	<u>89</u>

Those figures do not correspond with those of children of school age given in the 3rd Chapter. They represent an average of children in attendance at School during the year.

(63) As a religious, the desservent is under the authority of the Superior of Fort Simpson. As a pastor, he is also under the jurisdiction of the Fort Simpson pastor. When compared to other Missions, such as Fort Liard, Chard, McKay, etc, the Fort Wrigley Mission could also have an independent status.

(64) Cath. Voice No.61, Sept. 1958, p.3-7.

(65) Cath. Voice No.31, May 1955, p.5. - And No.32, July 1955, p.9.

(66) Cath. Voice No.28, March, 1955, p.9.

(67) See Chapter 3, page 131

Father LESAGE to Mr. G. ROBERTSON (15-4-1955) - (30-5-1955)

See also "School Regulations" Section 3 of the School Ordinance, Chap. 18 of 1952 amended on the 9th of July 1956, Part 2, Sections 19-23

A "Combined School" means a school where a part of the building in which the school is located has been allocated for the instruction of Roman Catholic children in Grades 1 to 8; part of the building has been allocated for the instruction of other children, and the remainder of the building has been allocated for the instruction and use of all children. Anyone who ignores those regulations may easily be misled.

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Chapter Two

THE HOSPITAL

1916 - FOUNDATION OF THE FIRST HOSPITAL.

The erection of a Hospital at Fort Simpson had been proposed in 1911 by the Indian Agent, Mr. CARD, shortly after he had taken up residence on the Island. He made the suggestion to Father ANDURAND, Superior of the Sacred Heart Mission, who in turn passed the information to his Bishop, Mt. Rev. G. BRIEYNAT. (1) As we have related on pages 28, 29, Brother KERAUTREY initiated the work of construction in 1913. Mr. OUELLET has been the contractor, Brothers MARK and LOUIS assisted him in the various jobs till completion in 1916. The Grey Nuns arrived on the 16th of July of that year, and took possession of it on the 7th of September. Owned by the Sacred Heart Mission, the Hospital was administered by the Superior. Four Grey Nuns were given charge of the medical, nursing and disciplinary organization. Sister GIROUARD was the first Superior responsible for the first six patients. Their number had increased to 14 in the fall. Sister DOSITEE, the first registered Nurse, assumed the functions of Superintendent of the Hospital in 1917, having the care of 13 patients. Of that number, a few were disabled and old age persons. (2) After 5 years of operation, the number of patients reached 21 persons. Doctor McDONALD, an itinerant Doctor, was the first medical officer who inspected the Hospital in 1919. He arrived on the 22nd of September, inoculated the children confined at the Hospital and donated to the Superior the sum of \$ 5.00.

Doctor RICHARDSON was another itinerant Doctor who visited the St. Margaret's Hospital in 1922. On the 11th of July, he amputated the arm of a woman named CHRISTINE who had come from Fort Norman. Travelling by boat, Doctor RICHARDSON continued to visit the Hospital until the arrival of Doctor TRUESDELL in 1926. (3) For a period of ten years then, the nursing Sister acted as medical officer and performed minor operations when necessity warranted it. Sister DESROCHERS, for instance, amputated one finger to Brother J.M. BEAUDET on the 30th of March 1925. During that decade, the St. Margaret's Hospital was rather a nursing station and a home for the old and crippled, than an institution for medical treatments and operations. It was properly the period of foundation. Four to six Sisters maintained alone the operation of the Hospital, except for occasional extra-work made by one or two employees.

Sister OLIVIER succeeded the first Superior in 1920 and was replaced in 1923 by Sister SAINTE ALBINE, and in 1925 by Sister St. VINCENT DE PAUL. Sister DESROCHERS was the second registered Nurse. She took office in 1922,

and was replaced in 1927 by Sister ADELARD who directed the nursing department for a period of ten years. (4) The cost of operation and maintenance of the institution averaged \$ 4,000 a year. No salary were paid to the Sisters, while the Superior and Brothers worked part time for the institution. Both Oblates and Grey Nuns had free meals and board which were included in the total cost of operation.

1927 began a period of improvement in the facilities and equipment of the Hospital. It will increase slowly and gradually as the number of patients increased and more funds were made available. Expenditures were forcibly reduced to the amount of revenues mainly from Government grants. Until 1929, under Father MOISAN's administration, it had not been possible to mechanize and modernize the facilities and departments of the Hospital. (5) And under Father ROBIN's from 1929 to 1935, little could be done yet. The fire that destroyed in 1930 the whole building and most of its content has slowed down the material improvement which had been initiated. (6) The Superior estimated then at approximately \$ 20,000 the value of the building and at some \$ 12,000 the supplies and equipment that were lost.

THE SECOND HOSPITAL.

The construction of a new Hospital was started immediately on another site closer to the Mackenzie River. The frame construction was larger, measuring 40' x 100'. One veranda at each end was built for the convenience of the patients and Sisters. The building had one more story, more modern facilities such as an operation room and one private room, large space for the personnel of Sisters and employees. A new deep water well was constructed close to the River, and a sewage disposal line was built in 1931. A private telephone line to the Doctor's residence was installed in 1932 for faster communication. By the end of December of that year, 26 patients were under care.

1937 was marked by the greatest improvement known then: and electric power plant was built and put into operation. The D.C. 110 V. generator, actuated by a Diesel oil engine, produced enough electricity for the needs of the Hospital, the Mission and the School unit. Electric machines, instruments and equipments were soon brought in. Thus in 1938, electric lamps for treatment of the patients were made available. Electric washers and driers were put in operation in 1940. The first refrigerator was installed in 1941, while the X-Ray machine was set up in 1945.

Sister St. ADJUTOR was appointed Superior in 1931 for a six-year term and replaced by Sister GADBOIS who headed the institution until 1943. Three Nursing Sisters directed the professional department during that period: Sisters MEYER, G. LAMBERT and G. FORTIN.

Epidemics plagued the population of Fort Simpson and the surrounding Settlements prior to the establishment of the St. Margaret's Hospital. They continued afterwards to impair the health of a large number of people. It had been one reason put forward by Mr. CARD to erect on the Island an Hospital that would check the havoc of contagious diseases and give to the victims

Hommages



T. Honorée Mère B. Saint-Louis, Supérieure Générale — 1958



Grotte de N.-D.-de-Lourdes — 1958



St. Margaret's School children—1957



Children's Dance—1958

proper treatment and care. There has been an epidemic of jaundice and whooping cough in 1919. (8) The influenza called 'flue' took the life of 30 children and adults in 1928, while several others were saved through the care and treatment given at the Hospital. (9) The measles brought 35 patients to the Sisters care in September 1935. By the end of that month, 64 had been treated, but none had died.

In the early years of the establishment of the Hospital, the care of the destituted children had been a blessing for the country. For instance, on the 24th of February 1919, two little girls found in the bush were brought to the Hospital. In 1922, two little boys, abandoned by their parents, were given to the Sisters on the 3rd of June. In those years, small children whose parents could not take care of, were admitted at the Hospital as destituted.

Undoubtedly, an Hospital is a center of health and welfare for the population of a community and surrounding districts. The people of Fort Simpson and neighbouring settlements have certainly taken advantage of it, particularly in times of epidemics and serious diseases. Unfortunately, a relatively large number of patients have died at the Hospital during the first quarter century of its operation. Most of the deaths however occurred among children and adults who were incurable or who were admitted too late for proper care and treatment. In spite of that, an opinion began to spread in the early 30's that admission at the St. Margaret's Hospital meant for the patients admission to the cemetery. Such a fear has caused a percentage of sick persons to stay away from the Hospital, and has made others unhappy while they were under care. Yet it is safe to state that most patients admitted in our institution have found comfort and satisfaction. Many of them received the spiritual help of the priest which they might not have found otherwise, either during their illness or at the moment of their death.

Among other cases, we note that of Corrinne SONFRERE, a 21-year-old girl who was admitted in 1940 for treatment against pulmonary infection. In April, Corrinne realized that she would not overcome the fatal disease. Then she called for the priest to receive the Sacrament of Extreme-Unction and Holy Communion. As the pains and coughs receded for a while, she asked for the spiritual comfort of Holy Eucharist, and prepared herself to appear before her Judge. On the 8th in the evening, she asked again Father FEUVRIER to say the prayers for the dying, which she answered with visible consolation and joy. Towards the end, she thanked the priest with a smiling face, expressing her hope in the reward awaiting her in Heaven. She died peacefully the next afternoon in the presence of the priest whom she had called again for the spiritual benefit of her departing soul. This is one of the many stories of persons who instead of receiving physical recovery, found at the St. Margaret's Hospital consolation, strength and peace of soul. It is worthy of note that Corrinne SONFRERE's family was completely wiped out at Kakisa Lake in the 30's by the 'flue' and tuberculosis.

The number of patients averaged 21 throughout the year 1941, while the number of employees varied then between two and four, except for special and occasional services. By the end of the first quarter century of operation, the cost had more than doubled. The increase in expenditures were due mainly to the purchase and use of electric power, machine equipments and other new

facilities for the treatment and welfare of the patients. (9a) These improvements have been introduced gradually with the increase in Government grants. During the period of establishment and under the direction of Doctor TRUESDELL, there has been little control by the Officials of the Health Department. Much of the application of the rules and requirements for the health and welfare of the patients was left to the initiative of the local Doctor and Hospital authorities. The treatment of tuberculosis cases was limited to those persons most affected and who wanted hospitalization. For instance, 15 cases only were treated in 1941, while 28 patients have been under care for other minor diseases. In 1931, there has been 13 persons under care for tuberculosis and in 1921 there were 22. Eight had died in 1921, six in 1931, and four in 1941. (10) It is evident that a small percentage only of persons sick with tuberculosis have come to the Hospital for care. Many others have died in their homes, although their number is not exactly known.

The Department of Health has undertaken to X-ray the whole population in 1950, with a portable machine operated by an ambulant medical party. Not all persons were examined and it is quite probable that a number of cases escaped the scrutinizing eye of the Doctor and of his machine, as it happens even in our days. The St. Margaret's Hospital has had an X-Ray machine and equipment since 1945 and made it available to those who wanted to take benefit of it. Sister AUBERTIN was the first nursing Sister to take charge of the X-Ray department. She was replaced in 1949 by Sister RHEAULT.

During the six-year superioabate of Sister A. LEDUC (1943-1949), the Hospital staff was increased to 5 employees to assist the 8 Sisters in the different services. A sterilizer machine was installed in 1948, as well as an electric dough-mixer and water softener. A telephone line was connected with the town system. A year earlier, a large washing machine and wringer replaced the smaller ones. And in 1949, a new refrigerator was put in operation.

By that time, the cost of maintenance and operation of the St. Margaret's Hospital had jumped to the \$ 30,000 mark. And that sum did not include the salaries of the Sisters and Brothers in charge of the institution. The Administrator (who is also the Chaplain) had of course no salary. However, the Grey Nuns and Oblates had free meals at the Hospital, while the Sisters' cost of room and board was included in the total expenses.

Since its foundation in 1916 and for many years after, the St. Margaret's Hospital has entertained cordial relations with the people of Fort Simpson and occasional visitors. Government officials were served meals and given shelter during their stay in the Settlement. Others were also granted the same services. Among many examples, we note those of Mr. NICHOLSON of Imperial Oil Co. who was given hospitality in 1920, on his way to Fort Norman; Doctor BOURGET of Fort Resolution in September 1924; Mr. Cummings, Department of Mines, in June 1932; a Miss BALDWIN, an employee at Doctor TRUESDELL's in the summer 1934; Mr. H. MCGILL, the new Deputy Minister, in July 1934; Doctor HOMER in the fall 1937; Mr. and Mrs. C. CAMSELL in August 1941; Doctor A. LEAHEY of the Department of Agriculture, Cpl. H. SEPPALA of the R.C.S. Corps and M. HOLMAN Superintendent of the Forestry Department in August 1944. Shortly after their arrival, Mr. and Mrs. J. GILBEY were served lunch at the Hospital on April 26, 1947. The School Inspector MCKINNON was given a 3-day hospitality in April 1948.

Doctor PENNER, a student, took his meals at the Fathers' Refectory from June to August 1948, while boarding at the Mission.

In those years boarding facilities were very limited in the settlement. The Hospital authorities welcome as their guests all visitors in need of either hospitality or meals for a few days, and in a few cases even for several weeks and months. The annals of the Grey Nuns have recorded many testimonies of appreciation on the part of those who came in contact with them and with their institution and work. (11)

Most welcome of course were the Superiors General of their Orders. The Very Reverend Mother PICHE was the first Mother General to visit Fort Simpson in 1917, only a year after the foundation. The Second was the Very Reverend Mother DUGAS on July 31, 1924. And henceforth, every four year or about, the Head of the Religious Institute of the Sisters of Charity came from the Mother House of Montreal to inspect her institution and to encourage her spiritual Daughters in the works of mercy on this Island. Very Reverend Mother St. LOUIS DE GONZAGUE in 1927; Very Reverend Mother PICHE in 1930 and 1933; Very Reverend Mother FERLAND in 1937; Very Reverend Mother M. GALLANT in 1942 and 1949; Very Reverend Mother SAINTE CROIX in 1953.

The Superior Provincial of the Sisters, who has her residence at Fort Smith, makes each year a tour of inspection of the Hospitals and Schools directed by the Order. The St. Margaret's Hospital community looks forward to her visit with interest and satisfaction. The success of the Sisters' work and the progress of their spiritual life depend much on the directions given by the Mother Provincial who represents in their midst the Mother General, Head of the Institute. (12)

The last decade of operation of the St. Margaret's Hospital has been marked by a noticeable development in both personnel and services. An increase in the number of patients, more diversified medical and nursing treatments had then required additional facilities to the building. More and better professional assistance under new Doctors and from the Charles Cammell's Hospital in the treatment of tuberculosis hastened the construction of a new addition.

Sister R. TROTTIER has become Superior and Sister G. RHEAULT the Head Nurse in 1949. The latter was replaced by Sister C. REINDEAU a year later. It was under her leadership that a 20' x 40' wing was built at the South end of the Hospital. Brother M. LAROQUE directed the work throughout the summer 1951. In November, one ward was ready for occupancy and in December another one received 4 more patients. Each patient had a brand-new bed and table. Bed lights were installed. Sinks provided running water. Chutes were built on each floor for disposal of dust and soiled cloths. The new section could accommodate then 20 patients, so that that building has now a maximum capacity of 60 beds.

Indications of the development may be taken from the official statistics recorded by the Hospital authorities. In 1916, eleven persons out of 19, who had been admitted, have died during their stage, while 5 were discharged and 3 remained under care. In 1936, 12 out of 81 admitted have died during the year. In 1951, 4 persons only passed away out of a total of 142 who had been cared for.

Since then until today, the percentage of death at the Hospital has been lower yet. An analysis of those figures shows that during the period of 35 years (1916-1951) only 10% of the patients taken to the Hospital for some illness have died while under the care of the Sisters. It shows also that the 60 patients who have died at the Hospital during that period represents only 15% of those who have died in and around Simpson. The Mission's Cemetery opened in 1916 contained at the end of 1951 the remains of 380 persons. Only 60 of them had died at the Hospital, while the 320 others passed away at their homes or were brought in from the bush. (14)

One of the factors that speeded up the development of the St. Margaret's Hospital was the medical direction given by young and new Doctors who required that priority be given to professional methods and standard regulations in the treatment and care of the patients. The Hospital authorities of course shared that view, but could not realize it until Government authorities and funds made it possible.

A young Doctor from Toronto, Doctor FLEMMING, arrived here in July 1950, to replace Doctor TRUESDELL. As he boarded at the Mission for over a month, the Superior, Father V. PHILIPPE had ample opportunities to confer with him on their common problems. By that time however, plans had been made for the construction of an addition and also of a storage place to free more space in the main building. Concurrently then, expenses jumped to a higher peak, reaching \$ 50,000 in 1951, \$ 60,000 in 1952, and \$ 85,000 in 1953. And the summit ever reached was in 1954 when the cost of operation and maintenance of the Hospital totalled \$ 104,000. When that sum is compared to the \$ 4,000 spent in 1916, one may easily observe that the people of Fort Simpson and neighbouring districts were well served. No more and no better services could be rendered by the Hospital authorities in this part of the country. This is true also at the time of this writing, when a comparison is made between the fee charged per day per patient by the St. Margaret's Hospital, and that charged by similar institutions owned by other interests in the Mackenzie. I am referring to the \$ 6.00 fee for a room at the St. Margaret's Hospital and to the \$ 12.00 fee for a room at the Hay River Hospital which does not give as good services. The Yellowknife Hospital collects \$ 16.00 per patient per day and does not provide three times more than our Hospital in comfort, in care and in welfare.

The whole population of Fort Simpson has not taken full opportunity of the nursing services offered them on this Island. In 1952, for instance, one Simpsonian only had been admitted for treatment of tuberculosis, while 30 persons were admitted from the neighbouring settlements. The truth is not that tuberculosis was more rampant among the people of those settlements. Evidence has proved in later years that a large number of our people needed treatment but were not taken care of. It may be that some of them escaped the scrutinizing eye of the X-Ray machine and that others did not bother about their health. In some instances, those touched with the disease may have spread the germs among those of their intimate circle. The resurgence of cases in recent time indicates, in our opinion, that a percentage of the population of Fort Simpson (small as it may have been) has not been treated and then caused others to be victims of their own infection. The X-Ray surveys made under Government authorities since 1950 have certainly stopped the spread of tuberculosis and con-

tributed to protect the health of the whole population. We presume however that the medical authorities have been aware that more thoroughly investigations would have stamped out sources of that disease. It is more likely that they were prepared to take the necessary measures to achieve that purpose. Yet, some negligence on the part of medical officers and of the population is postponing the work of eradicating the plague that has distressed so much our people in the past. (15)

One of the many measures taken by medical authorities has been the special treatments at the C. Gamsell's Hospital to patients previously admitted at the St. Margaret's Hospital. Diagnosis and surgical operations under the direction of specialists have given a success in several cases. It is beyond doubt that expert physicians will be most helpful in the work of preventing and controlling tuberculosis among the people of Fort Simpson. It cannot be overlooked however, that a number of patients do not welcome their confinement to the City Hospital. We have heard and observed them in a psychological mood adverse to a safe and rapid cure. In the midst of strangers and far from their environment, they do not react easily to the treatments applied to their particular cases. Although in some instances, it may be an unavoidable necessity, it appears to us that in other instances the cure might be as effective with ordinary treatments in a local Hospital. Further, it is noticeable that the spiritual atmosphere lacking in a Government Hospital, but which is prevailing in our Catholic Hospital is an important factor to the keeping up of the Patients' moral and of their psychological comportment. Thence, it is desirable for the welfare of our sick people that those only in extreme need of special care, be transferred from the St. Margaret's Hospital to the City institutions.

Doctor BAKER replaced Doctor FLEMMING in June 1952 and directed during two years the health welfare at Fort Simpson and in the neighbouring settlements. With the arrival, in 1952, of a new Superior, Sister T. CHALOUX began a serie of improvements in the organization of the Hospital services. In October of that year, the number of employees was raised to 19. Dressed in white and wearing a cap, the girls were a symbol of the developments in the making. A new electric call and light system for each patient replaced the previous one. Ultra-violet ray treatments were introduced. A new hot water boiler provided better services to the kitchen and throughout the building. A large laundry room with better and more commodities eased the work of the staff. In February 1953, the Superior, a registered Nurse, organized a pharmacy department. Doctor BAKER donated some of his blood for infusion in one patient on the 27th of that month, with the hope of saving her life. Unfortunately the person died shortly after. By that time, the St. Margaret's Hospital was filled to its 60- bed capacity. Until then, X-Ray films processing and handling had been done in a small ordinary room. In March 1953, a dark room was built for that purpose. Five years later, a larger room has been fitted with better new equipment and facilities. True, the pace of development of our Hospital has been slow. Yet, efficient services have been provided at all times in as much as were required by illnesses and diseases most common in the area. Special cases that could not be taken care of by the Doctors were sent to a City Hospital for proper treatment and operations. In the whole history of the St. Margaret's Hospital, there have been only five patients admitted for treatment of gonorrhoea, a few of cancer, two of syphilis and two caesarian operations. Most diseases were of pulmonary character and most illnesses were of minor

types either of nursing and surgery. In a small Hospital such as the St. Margaret's Hospital it is hardly possible and needed to operate specialized departments. Further, the cost would be prohibitive and exceeding the limited revenues of the institution.

Sister T. CHALOUX as Superior and Sister R. LAMARCHE as head nurse took office in 1953. For three and four years respectively they directed the destinies of the institution under circumstances which favoured improvement in the management of the Hospital. Each section was allowed more freedom in the discharge of the functions. More decentralization was introduced in the keeping of patients records and reports. In October 1953, as the number of patients(70) exceeded the bed capacity, arrangements were made for the transfer of the employees to new boarding quarters. The department reserved to the Sisters and the utility rooms were overcrowded, as well as the employees rooms. A registered Nurse, Miss PLAMONDON was the first to evacuate the Hospital for the new quarters, in the near-by Nurses' Residence, on the 12th of October 1953. The warehouse built in 1951 was then transformed first for one nurse, and later in the fall for the teacher at the St. Margaret's School, Mr. W. FELLOWES. A night fireman and watchman began his functions on the 12th of October of that year 1953, to insure more comfort and safety to the patients. The night nurse residence was enlarged at the same time to accommodate one more employee.

Teaching to the Hospital patients was initiated then by Mr. FELLOWES, giving part of his time for the new function. In December, he reported that the students were "going strong" and he noted that Edwin LINDBERG busied 'collecting many H' gradings in his correspondance course. (17) In January, "Edwin had 40 'H' gradings to his credit, while Phoebe GAUDET and Beatrice SIBBESTON were "making this vory merry for the teacher in Grade 6." A dozen students received instruction then, and there were 29 in the fall of that year. (18) The Superintendent of Schools, Mr. G. DEVITT, gave consideration then to the need of special teacher for the patients. (19) Meanwhile, Mr. M. GALLANT who had replaced Mr. FELLOWES at the St. Margaret's School, continued part-time teaching to the patients during the school year 1954-1955. In April 1955, the Director of the Northern Affairs Department in formed the authorities that the position could not be established before the school year 1956-1957. (20) However, a special teacher, Miss M. ROHERTY, arrived in September of 1955 to assume the new function. In October, she reported an enrollment of 26 students for the academic courses, ranging from grade one to eight inclusive. Eleven were 16 years old or under, while the other ranged in age from 17 to 24 years. "The course given to the Hospital patients, she said, is designed to form part of the treatment of tuberculosis... It is primarily meant to keep the patients mentally healthy by being occupied in working toward some purpose peculiar to him. Handwork and crafts are encouraged among those who are not interested in academic work; thus giving them occupational therapy." (21) Miss ROHERTY taught for two years and was replaced by Miss M. FORTIN for the school term 1957-1958. And Miss McDONALD carried on the work in 1958-1959.

Another innovation in the Hospital services was the employment of Nurses' Aides for the care of the patients. Rita WRIGLEY, who had graduated at the St. Ann's Hospital, Fort Smith, in July 1954, was the first to assume the new function. She was joined in the fall of that year by another Nurse's Aide, Miss F. TARDIF, of the same graduation. Their functions were of professional character

and their knowledge and experience in nursing were of valuable assistance to the registered Nurses. (22) Others were employed in later years and proved by their work that a portion of girls in the North could likewise be of greater service to their fellow-citizens and at the same time acquired better training as future wives and mothers.

The Hospital authorities were delighted in those years over the fact that no person under their care had died during a period of 17 months. (7th Dec. 1953 to 7th April 1955) The prestige of the Sisters and nursing persons was all the more enhanced, while the reputation of the Doctor, in the mind of the people, became synonymous of 'miracle maker'. Incidentally, that happy period coincided with the 20 first months of my function as administrator and chaplain of the St. Margaret's Hospital. Yet no one has given me credit for the absence of deaths then. In fact, Doctor NYHUS and I had arrived at Simpson at the same time, in July 1953. Those coincidences show how easily public opinion is lead astray by apparent causes and fails to grasp the factors causing the effects apparent to all. In December 1954, the personnel of the Hospital comprised 7 Sisters, (two of them registered Nurses), two other Registered Nurses, two Nurses Aides, 17 girls employees and one man attendant. 67 patients were under care.

In 1954, Sister T. CHALOUX, Superior, began to organize a social service as part of the Hospital work. The personnel of the institution joined with the local ladies of the Catholic Women League and took part in their activities of handicraft work. The two groups combined their knowledge and experience in training several youngsters in the art of knitting, sewing and of other domestic handiworks. Even elders took opportunity of the classes to acquire or perform ability in those crafts. The activities of both groups slowed down for a while in 1956, but they were resumed the following year under the direction of Sister CHAMPAGNE, directress of the Nurses' Residence. The "Social Service" worked then in co-operation with the Catholic School teacher, Miss K. McGUINNESS, in conducting for the benefit of the school girls classes of knitting and sewing. In 1958, the organization became more a sort of charitable center distributing to the needy used goods which were given free or paid by part-time work and at an nominal price. The personnel of the Nurses' Residence took a two-hour a week course in elementary course during the school year 1958-1959 under the direction of Miss McGuinness and Sister CHAMPAGNE.

Attempts have been made in 1954 to initiate a course in elementary nursing for the girls in service at the Hospital. As they faced the urgent need of better trained girls in ward auxiliary work, the Hospital authorities believed that such a course would also be of great benefit to the 20 girls employed throughout the year. Following consultation and advice from the Fort Smith medical officer, Doctor C.G. McRAE, the plan was postponed indefinitely. In the opinion of the latter, the proposed course would overlap the Nurse's Aide course given then at the St. Ann's Hospital at Fort Smith. A high standard in the Nurse's Aide course in the future, according to Doctor McRAE's views, might create room for the establishment of a lower grade of auxiliary service. In any case, thought the medical officer, both courses could best be given at the same place. (23) He might have been right in assuming that a course in auxiliary work would then be inexpedient. Yet, the fact was then, and is yet, that most girls in service are discharging routine procedures and

work without the benefit of any preparatory training. Moreover, in our opinion, they and others are deprived of the opportunity to receive a training, in home and community living, while they are employed at the Hospital. It is beyond doubt that only a few percentage of school girls will qualify for a high standard Nurse's Aide course during the next decade or so. The scientific course in home economics planned by experts for the girls in attendance at the new school center may have their value and benefits. On the other hand, it is expedient, in our opinion, that a course in auxiliary ward service be given to the Hospital girls, in conjunction with the home economic training. (24)

Public relations between the St. Margaret's Hospital authorities and the people appears to have been good at all times. Co-operation with the medical Doctor, appointed by the Department of Health and welfare, has seldom been at fault. Although the institution is opened to patients of all races and religious faiths, the majority of them have been and are now of the Catholic Faith. The same remark applies to the employees. Freedom of right conscience in religious worship is a policy held by the Catholic authorities towards non-Catholic patients and personnel. The latter may attend religious services at their center of gathering, while the patients may, upon request, receive individually spiritual guidance and religious comfort from the respective and authorized representatives of the church to which they belong. When misunderstanding or any complaint arises in such matter between the non-Catholic patient and any other person or agent, the Administrator of the St. Margaret's Hospital, who is the Superior of the Sacred Heart Mission, is the sole and final authority who shall judge and decide accordingly. (25) It is no news to say that suspicion of undue influence by Catholics on Protestant patients may easily arise in the minds of some parents and friends. Proselytes of different religious denominations are bent to ascertain their influence over the patients whom they consider as their spiritual charges. Fairness and respect of the right conscience are rules which no one may consider lightly and which Catholic authorities deem necessary to be observed by all concerned. (26) The history of our institution, to our knowledge, is fairly clear in this matter. Credit must be given to the majority of the people for the good public relations between the authorities and those who have been served by the institution for almost half a century.

The management of the St. Margaret's Hospital has diversified with the years. Office work is taking now almost the full time of one person. Dietary has become more complicated after the manner of modern Hospitals. The laundry department has reached the stage of minutious practices which are enforced in City institutions. Under such conditions, a large number of auxiliary wards must be employed, even when the number of patients decreases to half the bed-capacity. And this is reflected in the cost of maintenance and operation of the building. Twenty years ago, 74 patients were taken care of during the year (1937) at the cost of \$ 4,000. In 1958, the cost reached \$ 52,000 for 395 patients. Breaking down the figures, we arrive at the followings:
74 patients have cost 63 ¢ per day for 6,374 days, in 1937.
395 patients have cost \$ 3.60 per day for 14,282 days in 1958.
This represents an increase in cost of about 6 times over the period of the last 20 years. Yet the fee charged to public ward patients has increased by four times only: namely, \$ 1.75 per patient per day in 1937, and \$ 6.25 in 1958. This latter figure is half the cost of fee at the Yellowknife Hospital. (28)

Communauté des Soeurs en 1930
devant la résidence des Pères.



Soeurs et patients – 1935



1940



Hôpital – 1945



T.H. Mère Ste-Croix et Communauté – 1952



Hospital School and Teacher:
1953 - 54



Patients on the veranda—1954



Nurses and Residence—1958



Rev. M. T. Chaloux, Provincial—1958

The high cost of maintenance and operation of our Hospital can be adjusted only by efficient management and strenuous efforts on the part of the religious personnel of Grey Nuns and Oblates. Those have been the rules observed by the St. Margaret's Hospital authorities since the beginning of its foundation and establishment.

The readers unfamiliar with Hospital administration, and those uninformed of the spiritual duties of religious Orders will not find in our pages an accurate account of the work done at the Hospital. We may even give inadvertently an imperfect impression of the accomplishments made in the service of God and of our Church for the benefit of the patients and people of Fort Simpson and neighbouring Settlements.

As we glance at the past, we discern first four Sisters and a few patients frugally fed, sheltered in an unpainted, unfurnished and poorly heated building. They busied in manual work, unassisted and without the services of a resident medical Doctor. Then, ten years later, we observe six Sisters and a few employees, struggling in want of special equipment and commodities for the care of the sick and infirm. Improvements were introduced however with the assistance of a resident Doctor. From 1937, we note an impetus of development in the services that raised favourably the standard of the whole unit; better dietary and laundry equipments, electric services, elementary radiotherapy and diagnostic radiology were among the improvements which brought benefits to the care and health of the patients. As the years went by, larger facilities became necessary and were made available in 1951. From then on, we witness progress in the care and treatment of tuberculosis patients. New Doctors, renewed equipments, furnitures and fixtures, isolation of contagious cases, separated living quarters for the employees, have been factors which modernized the 40-year old institution and contributed to its development. (29)

One of the main developments observed in recent years has occurred in the administrative field of the St. Margaret's Hospital. Compared with that of the early years, the task of book-keeping, of report and registration routine is now an exacting one that drains the energy of the personnel. (30) This has been the task of Sister C. ASSELIN, Superior since 1956, of Sister M. LEMIRE, Head Nurse since 1958 and of the present staff of Sisters.

As we glance again over the years of history of the St. Margaret's Hospital, we observe with amazement the sum of temporal and spiritual works accomplished by all those devoted to its service. Above all, we note with admiration the inspiring examples which they have conveyed to their patients and to the populations of the district of Fort Simpson.

References

- (1) See Chap. I, pages 28, 29.
- (2) Chronique de l'Hopital Ste. Marguerite, Fort Simpson - Juillet 1916
- (3) See Part II, page 36.
- (4) See Table, page 110.
- (5) In 1925, smoke came out of the stove pipe system in the building, part of the winter, indicating the inconveniences of installation at that time. On October 3rd of that year, a cream separator was being used.
- (6) See Part II, page 41.
- (7) The cost of such a building today would be over \$ 200,000.
- (8) Chronique, Oct. 3rd, 1919. - See also Part II, page 32.
- (9) Register of the Sacred Heart Mission, 1928. - Several patients died in tents and homes for lack of space at the Hospital, but were treated and cared for by the Nurses.
- (9a) The fees charged were: \$ 3.00 for private room; \$2.50 for semi-private and \$1.75 for public ward. Cfr. Ledger of Sacred Heart Mission, page 200.
- (10) Register of St. Margaret's Hospital, 1916-1952.
- (11) The Chroniques note that Andy WITTINGTON's Hotel was filled with boarders and that a few visitors were boarded at the Hospital. 27th June 1945.
- (12) See List of Names, page 110.
- (13) Catholic Voice No. 11, Feb. 1952, page 7.
- (14) Register of births, marriages and burials, Sacred Heart Mission, 1916-51
- (15) Intensive survey made by Doctor O'ROONEY proved that the TONKA's and GAZON's families were affected with tuberculosis. 14 of them were admitted for treatment, while Mrs. B. GAZON was sent to Camsell Hospital for treatment in May 1959. Further survey may prove that others are also affected.
- (16) An electric call system with lights was installed in 1950. Also Ultra-Violet Ray equipment.
- (17) Catholic Voice, No. 19, Dec. 1953.
- (18) Catholic Voice, No. 20, Jan. 1954.
- (19) Father LESAGE to Mr. G. DEVITT (11-11-1954)
Mr. G. DEVITT to Father LESAGE (25-11-1954; 3-1-1955)
- (20) F.J. CUNNINGHAM to G. DEVITT (18-4-1955) Copy to Father LESAGE
- (21) Catholic Voice, No. 24, Oct. 1955, pages 3 and 4.
- (22) Catholic Voice No. 23, Aug. 1954; also No. 24 Sept. 1954.
- (23) Father LESAGE to Dr. McRAE, Fort Smith (22-6-1954)
Dr. McRAE to Father LESAGE, (8-7-1954)
- (24) The Nurse's Aide courses at Fort Smith have been discontinued in 1958. Attempts are being made to continue the courses for training girls who have a minimum of primary education. The vocational program for girls at Yellowknife may have been a factor in discouraging the Nurse's Aide courses.
- (25) Memo by Father LESAGE to Doctor O'ROONEY, Fort Simpson.
- (26) In may and June 1959, reports indicated that the Anglican Diaconess claimed spiritual jurisdiction over two Hospital patients who were both baptized by the Catholic Priest shortly after their births. - It has been also reported that the Pentecostal minister and the diaconess proselytized eagerly in June 1959, for the salvation of a baptized Catholic patient married by the Catholic Priest.

(27) A menu is listed for each day of the week, and for each week of the month. A considerable variety of food, beverages, canned stuff is served to the patients. In the opinion of the writer, much of that variety is detrimental to the appetite of the native patients and is no substitute for the basic food, such as fresh meat and fish, which some are daily craving for. - An amount of linen and cloths sent to the laundry room once or twice a month in earlier years is nowadays dumped in the washing machine every day, whether clean or not.

(28) Financial and general Reports to the bureau of Statistics. Also Records and Statements by Father C. GILLES, General Bursar of the Missions of Mackenzie, Fort Smith.

(29) The new addition measuring 20' x 40' was built in 1951 and opened in Jan. 1952. The Nurses' Residence has been fully occupied in 1956.

Equipments, such as a Baby's incubator, blood suction machine, oxygene treatment unit, new X-Ray room and processing devices, new pharmacy room, new Microscope, complete new large laundry washers, driers and presses. Potato peeler, electric toaster, bread slicer, meat saw and meat shopper and mixer, ice-cream machine, a ten-ton walk-in refrigerator and other minor modern furnitures and equipments for the operation and maintenance of the services.

(30) Application for Government grant from different Departments for individual and special classes of patients. Accounts to and from Workmen's Compensation Boards, Blue Cross Association, and other group plans and contracts. Collection and statement of account to local persons, correspondance, and affairs with, reports from and to Camsell Hospital, etc... etc...

HOSPITAL PERSONNEL

STATISTICS

SUPERIORS		HEAD NURSES	ADMISSIONS	DISCHARGES	DEATHS
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1916	Sr. GIROUARD	Sr Ste DOSITHEE	1916	19	5	11
1917	"	"				
1918	"	"	1922	37	27	9
1919	"	"				
1920	Sr OLIVIER	"	1926	33	36	5
1921	"	"				
1922	"	Sr DESROCHERS	1932	83	79	7
1923	Sr Ste ALBINE	"				
1924	"	"	1936	81	90	12
1925	Sr St VINCENT DE PAUL	"				
1926	"	"	1942	76	77	5
1927	"	Sr St ADELARD				
1928	"	"	1946	119	116	7
1929	"	"				
1930	"	"	1951	142	145	4
1931	Sr St ADJUTOR	"				
1932	"	"	1956	235	250	1
1933	"	"				
1934	"	"	1958	332	324	3
1935	"	"				
1936	"	"				

1937	Sr GADBOIS	Sr MEYER				
1938	"	Sr LAMBERT				
1939	"	"				
1940	"	"				
1941	"	Sr FORTIN				
1942	"	"	1916-20	Rev. Mother LEVELLE		
1943	Sr A. LEDUC	Sr A. AUBERTIN	1920-27	Rev. Mother GIROUARD		
1944	"	"	1927-33	Rev. Mother E. LACHANCE		
1945	"	"				
1946	"	"	1933-39	Rev Mother A. LUSIGNAN		
1947	"	"				
1948	"	"	1939-46	Rev. Mother E. MARTIN		
1949	Sr R. TROTTIER	Sr G. RHEAULT				
1950	"	Sr C. RIENDEAU	1946-49	Rev. Mother E. KRISTOFF		
1951	"	"				
1952	Sr T. CHALOIX	"	1949-52	Rev. Mother A. GADBOIS		
1953	"	Sr R. LAMARCHE				
1954	"	"	1952-55	Rev. Mother M. LACHAMBRE		
1955	"	"				
1956	Sr C. ASSELIN	"	1955-...	Rev. Mother T. CHALOIX		
1957	"	"				
1958	"	Sr M. LEMIRE				
1959	"	"				

PROVINCIAL SUPERIORS

Chapter Three: THE SCHOOL

1917: MODEST BEGINNING OF THE St. MARGARET'S SCHOOL.

A modest beginning had marked the education of Catholic children at Fort Simpson. The St. Margaret's School, built in 1917, was completed the following year for its opening in September. (1) Its activities were rather limited for the first decade. From 11 pupils in 1918 the enrollment had then more than doubled, although only a few went higher than Grade 4. In 1923, Charlotte and Rachel HARRIS were in grade 5, while Tad HARRIS reached grade 8 in 1926, and also the three HOOKERS: Clara, Laura and Stanley, and Mary CAMSELL. Freddie SIBBESTON was in grade 5 the following year, while his sister Edna was one year behind. Among the few Indians enrolled during that decade, J. TANTCHE was the only one who made grade 5. (2)

The Sacred Heart Mission had the administration of the School, while the Grey Nuns were responsible for teaching in addition to the organization and discipline of the institution. For the first two years the whole cost of operation and maintenance was borne by the Mission. In 1920, the Government (3) initiated a payment of \$ 75.00 per year for the teacher's salary. In regard to civil law, the Catholic School was a private institution. But under the Church law, it was a PUBLIC school opened to all children, irrespective of their race, tongue and religion. The course of studies was that followed in the schools directed by the Indian Affairs Branch in the English speaking Provinces. True, most pupils were in the primary grades, since half of the pupils made one grade only. And 26 pupils out of a total of 100 passed the 4th grade.

The emphasis was placed on the basic activities of the elementary school: such as language arts, arithmetic, geography, history and the elements of science and fine arts. The Authorities of the Mission held the views that the primary function of their school in those years was the teaching of primary subjects. They made sure of "first things first". Sister MCGUIRK for 3 years and Sister FIRMIN for 5 years conducted teaching at St. Margaret's School permeating the secular education with a christian spirit, while the Pastor or his assistant imparted daily religious instruction to the pupils. Sister A. GAMACHE arrived in 1926 to assume the function which she would discharge for 15 years, training a whole generation of Catholic citizens in this community. Those were the HARRIS, the MCGURRANS, the SIBBESTONS, the FURLONGS, the WITLOCKS, the LAFFERTY, the VIL*LENEUVES etc... Sister GAMACHE educated also a number of Protestant children: the HOOKERS, SHERWOODS, etc...

92 pupils have been in attendance during that period. 40 of them made one grade only. However 10 made grade 5, three passed the 6th grade, while 8 topped grade 8, In those years, as it is today, a number of children enrolled at the

St. Margaret's School for one or more years were transferred by their parents to the Providence Residential School. For instance Mavis VILLENEUVE started at the St. Margaret's School in 1932 at the age of 5 years, but went to Fort Providence in 1935 where she continued her studies from the third grade up. It is noticeable again that most children who attended school for one year only were Indians who discontinued completely afterwards. Missing school was rampant in those years, mainly among Indian pupils. For instance during the fiscal year ending March 1929 the average attendance was 19,01 for the enrollment of 31 pupils. For 1934 the average attendance had been 14,40 with 19 pupils registered. (5)

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OF THE DEPARTMENT:

At any rate Catholic education was provided in the community as a public service and free of charge. For several years then, the St. Margaret's School was the only educational institution on the Island. In 1926, the Director of the Department of Interior, Mr. O.S. FINNIE indicated the intention of his department to assist our school with a grant in addition to that made by the Indian Affairs Branch. (6)

In 1940, a grant of \$ 200 per year was paid by that Department for the education of the children of non-Treaty status, in addition to a few dollars worth of furniture and school equipment. (7) By that time too, some difficulties had been raised relative to the financial responsibility of that Department towards the support of the St. Margaret's School. The Northern Administration admitted their responsibility towards the education of non-treaty pupils on a percentage basis in the same schools attended by treaty children. Yet the Indian Affairs appeared to have claimed sole control over the education in the St. Margaret's School since the percentage of their payment exceeded that paid by the Northern Administration. Further the enrollment of treaty children was smaller than that of non-treaty.

THE CALLING OF DIFFERENT NAMES.

As early as 1926, the Director of Indian Affairs called our school "Roman Catholic Mission School" (8), while 10 years later, the District Administrator, Mr. J.A. McDUGALL called it "Roman Catholic Day School" (9). At times it was referred to as "Fort Simpson Day School", and at other times as the "Fort Simpson Roman Catholic Day School". In 1931, Superintendent of Indian education, R.T. FERRIER classified it as "Indian Day School" (10). Twelve years later, the Indian Affairs Branch considered the St. Margaret's School as an Indian School yet (11).

It is not clear what the officials of the two Departments had in mind when they chose to call that private school under two different names. In later years, this calling of names took much significance when a movement in favour of an un-denominational school in the Settlement grew in importance. Local supporters of common school system argued of the need of such a new school, since the present one was and had been an INDIAN SCHOOL. There was much confusion in their arguments and more implications yet. For one thing the argument favoured racial segregation when the authorities of the Catholic school did not. For another it bred dissensions among Catholics who were invited to split between Indians and non-Indians for school purposes. At least it was liable to bring about such a split, as we shall give evidence later on.

Whatever may have been the motives of calling names in the 30's, it was nonsense since the St. Margaret's School was a private institution opened to children of all races, irrespective of their religions, supported in the main by the Catholic Mission who owned it, administered it, and was the sole authority responsible to both Departments in education matters. Hence, in the writer's opinion, the calling of different names became eventually a device to prepare and establish a common school of undenominational character (12). Whatever underlying forces may have been at work then, a generation of teachers and pupils made of their school an institution of education that contributed gradually to the development of the community and of the Catholic portion of it.

UPS AND DOWNS IN THE ENROLLMENT.

There have been ups and downs in the enrollment of the School since its opening which may be explained mainly by the movement of the local population. For a period of 15 years, Sister GAMACHE reported a maximum registration of 32 pupils in 1927, with an average attendance of 18,88, while the minimum registration occurred in 1936 with 8 pupils in attendance. And that was the lowest enrollment in the whole history of the St. Margaret's School (13). It is noticeable again during that period that most pupils registered were not Indians, and except for a few, those who completed the elementary grades were non-treaty pupils (14).

ABOUT INSPECTION OF THE SCHOOL.

The inspection of the Catholic School was made by the Indian Agent since 1918. Mr. W.F. HARRIS, who was first in several activities in the town, initiated the official inspection and made reports to his Department. It was continued in later years by Dr. TRUESDELL since 1926 until 1947, when a full time inspector assumed that function under the authority of the Northern Administration.

ESSENTIAL AND PRIMARY TASK UNDER THE DIRECTION OF SISTER McQUILLAN.

We noted earlier that the St. Margaret's School was moved from its first location to the new one in 1931. No change was made in the 22 x 22 frame building with 7 windows 3 x 4 1/2. However the interior was painted anew and improved. When Sister McQUILLAN took charge of teaching in 1940, 12 pupils only enrolled in the school that had a capacity of 27 seats. Those who have known Sister McQUILLAN were aware of her ability and qualifications as an educator. Her pupils who attended school regularly and punctually have made their grades with success. Others, a small number, who have failed to make their normal year must be blamed for it, since their missing school and little efforts to learn have been one major factor in their failure. Complaints were made in those years, as today, that the school was not up to standard. Misguided parents and others expected too much from the teacher and the school. Failure on the part of parents and of the community at large to co-operate in the work of the teacher and school is another major factor in the relative progress of the pupils. We might find in this fact an explanation for sending children by their parents to the Fort Providence Residential School where discipline, study work and environment achieve better educational results.

In any case the Catholic institution continued to perform its essential and primary task under the direction of Sister McQUILLAN. True, neither Sister GAMACHE nor Sister McQUILLAN placed much emphasis on the secondary aims of the school which are the joint responsibility of parents and the community. Secondary aims, such as social adjustment, physical training, citizenship, health.. etc, may have been neglected as separate and organized activities. Yet, however important these tasks may be, Sister McQUILLAN carried out her main, essential and primary functions, as it is evidenced by the official reports compiled by both the Mission and the Hospital. (15)

When one compares the activities of a day school in the 30's with those that will be carried on in the next few years in the new day school, it may appear that the former has seriously neglected important tasks and raised generations of citizens who may henceforth be handicapped for the rest of their lives (16). Perhaps this may be partly true; yet there are limits to what a school can do, when the home, the community and the Government shirk their respective responsibilities.

IMPROVEMENTS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

Since 1940, movie pictures were shown to the pupils at intervals and consisted mainly of educational films. For 4 years then the school was lighted with electrical lamps. Singing was part of the extra-curricular activities together with some training in music under the direction of one of the Sisters. The pupils were part of the family. On holidays and after school hours they took part in the picnics made by the personnel of the Mission and of the Hospital. Sleigh rides in the winter and boat expedition in the summer contributed to maintain interest of the children in their Catholic institution. Singing in church at the High Masses on Sundays and Holidays of obligation was one function performed by the pupils in those years. It is related for instance in 1942 that under the direction of Sister LAPALME, they sang beautifully on Easter Sunday. It was the school children who sang during Mass at the wedding of Ed. COOPER to Theresa McGURRAN on February 25, 1943. Sister SARASIN was the choir directress and was about to replace Sister McQUILLAN at school. Incidentally, both busied that summer painting the interior of the School.

1943 - THE 25-YEAR OLD SCHOOL.

At the opening of the 25-year old school in September 1943, the number of Catholic pupils enrolled was about the same than on the year of the establishment. There were 5 LAFFERTYS, 3 WITLOCKS, 2 McGURRANS, 2 VILLENEUVES and one SIBBESTON. One Protestant, Ronald CREE, aged 10 was registered in grade 5. Ernest VILLENEUVE, who had been attending the Fort Providence Residential School, during the previous year, was admitted in grade 5 in October. On the opening day, the pupils attended the Mass of the Holy Ghost as usual, and were welcome by Dr. TRUESDELL and Father TURCOTTE who conveyed words of encouragement for the school year. In December, Dr. TRUESDELL conducted a public examination of the pupils, noting their progress in general. He observed however that the attendance of a few was irregular and unpunctual. During the Christmas holidays, Sister SARASIN paid a visit to the parents of her pupils, as a gesture of good will and co-operation with them.

THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL, CENTER OF INTEREST IN THE COMMUNITY.

In those years, the practice of serving a school lunch on the cold days had been introduced as a regular service to the pupils. Another practice was the serving of a breakfast to the pupils following communion on the first Friday of the month. In the spring 1944, Sister SARASIN inaugurated the making of individual gardens by the pupils. There was quite a bit of excitement among the children on May 9th when they noticed their first radishes and lettuce coming out of the ground. In July the St. Margaret's School held a sale for the benefit of the Junior Red Cross. Again the following year, the children collected the sum of \$ 100 which was remitted to Dr. TRUESDELL on the occasion of the closing concert on June 29th. True, the Catholic School was a center of interest in the community under the lively direction of Sister SARASIN.

FIRST OFFICIAL INSPECTOR TO VISIT THE SCHOOL.

One event of some importance had taken place in the summer 1944, although we said earlier that no major event had marked that year (18). A school Inspector from Manitoba, Dr. A. MOORE, made a thorough inspection of the St. Margaret's School on June 27th. The educator had been delegated by the Federal Government to visit all the schools in the Mackenzie and to make reports with recommendations for their improvement and development. Dr. MOORE was accompanied by Dr. WHERRET who had been given authority to inspect the St. Margaret's Hospital. At the end of their visit, both expressed their satisfaction for the work done in the two institutions. And they conveyed their thanks for the cordial reception given by the personnel of the Mission and of the Hospital. The Superior, Rev. Father TURCOTTE, held long conferences with Dr. MOORE on education matters. But the priest observed a number of questionable opinions expressed by the Official and took much pain to correct some of his statements which appeared at variance with the truth for the facts (19).

It is of interest to note that the Official had come North to investigate about the feasibility of establishing new schools for the increasing population of the white children. Most schools had hitherto been owned and operated by the Catholic and Anglican Missions. In the towns of Fort Smith, Hay River, and Fort Simpson, the Anglican authorities had failed to meet the educational needs of the Protestant population. Their parents, although small in number, preferred schools where instruction should be strictly academic and neutral. It appeared then that opinions among Protestants supported a system of State schools of un-denominational character. Consequently, Dr. MOORE recommended a "publicly supported non-denominational school system..." and he stated that "separate schools should not be included in any publicly supported system of education" (20).

CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM.

The inspector raised opposition to the Residential School system. The Anglican authorities had closed in August 1936 their only boarding school along the Mackenzie River and moved it to the Arctic Coast, for the education of Eskimos and Loucheux children of their Faith. On the other hand, the Catholic authorities owned and operated three residential schools at the time of the investigations. Located at Fort Resolution, Fort Provi -

dence and Aklavik, those schools were taking care of the actual needs of the Catholic population scattered outside the settlements as well as residing in those forts, in addition to the Catholic day schools at Fort Smith and Fort Simpson. Both types of Catholic Schools, called "Mission Schools" were discriminately criticized by Protestants and a portion of the Catholic Population,

The boarding schools, it was alleged, had failed to train children adapted to their future occupations. Secondly, in the opinion of the secularists, those schools had a low academic standard of education because of the amount of religion included in their program and forced on the activities of the pupils. Dr. MOORE was not clear on those matters during his visit and in his report of 1944, but he emphasized his views three years later before a committee of the Federal Government on Indian education. (21) Most Natives and Métis were unaware of the investigations and of the recommendations made for the education of their children. Whatever criticisms of the Catholic Schools some of them may have made in those years, it is beyond doubt that the system was not questioned by the Catholic population. The ignorance and indifference of a large portion may be ascribed as a factor of criticism. As for the real and factual differences of the Catholic schools, it is saved to assumed that they could have been gradually remedied with the co-operation of all concerned. The Mission authorities, who were aware of the inspector report and of its underlying principles, observed with some concern the trend towards neutral education and its control in State-schools.

MICELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES AND CONTESTS.

Meanwhile the St. Margaret's school continued its function under the direction of Sister SARASIN. Anxious to improve her teacher's qualifications, she took a correspondance course from the Alberta Department of Education. And the school activities proceeded normaly. The Red Cross Section collected the sum of \$ 40 in late 1945. - A visit of the R.C.M.P. Inspector made in January 1946, acquainted the pupils with the work of the Force in the North. - Later, on August 21st, the new school inspector, Mr. J.W. MCKINNON, paid his first visit to the school and made a minute investigation under the instruction of the Federal Government. In the fall, the Superior of the Mission acquired a 35mm silent projector for showing Bible stories to the pupils in view of raising their interest in religious instruction.

January 1947 brought to the pupils an opportunity to display their knowledge and ability in a Health contest. The first prize went to Morris LAFFERTY, while Carl GRANATH and Ronald CREE won the others. - Handicraft work, including weaving of rugs, was part of the school program. A display was made at CREE's store; and a raffle held on February 27th brought a benefit of \$ 34.00. - Game Warden SHATTUCK conducted a "forest fire protection" contest among the pupils in June of that year. And by that time, inspector MCKINNON appeared for another school inspection. - At the closing party on June 20th, the pupils displayed their usual ability in singing and recitations. - Three of them had then completed grade 8: they were David VILLENEUVE, Ronald CREE and George WITLOCK. Sister SARASIN ended also her work at the St Margaret's School. Called to other duties, she departed from Simpson on the 24th of June 1947.

ATTENDANCE AND WORK OF THE PUPILS FOR THE PAST DECADES.

At this stage of the history of the Catholic school, it may be of interest to comment on the attendance and work of the pupils during the past decades. Accordingly, the example of two pupils affords a striking contrast in their progress at school. The one Arthur WITLOCK began school at the age of 4 years in early 1940, and had an attendance of 157 days at the end of the 1940-41 school year. In September 1941, Arthur was registered in grade one at the age of 6. The other, Morris LAFFERTY, aged 7 years, was also registered in grade one as he began school that month. And for four consecutive years, both made their grades. However, in September 1945, Morris, aged 11, was registered in grade 4, while Arthur, aged 10, was moved in grade 5. One explanation of Morris' retardation is found in the fact that he had missed 155 school days during 4 years, while Arthur had missed 39 days only during the same period. In 1946-47, both pupils repeated their respective grades. Then Morris was repeating grade 4 for three years, while Arthur repeated grade 5 once. And by the end of the school year 1947-48, Morris had completed grade 5, while Arthur completed grade 7. At first sight, it appears that the one had done much better than the other throughout the years. However, an accurate computation of their respective attendance shows that Morris made 5 grades in 7 years (1110 school days), while Arthur made his 5 grades in 8 years (1195 school days). (22) - When Morris quit school in 1949, he was about to complete grade 7 in a total of 1239 school days, having missed 174 school days, while his classmate Arthur had missed 69 days only in about the same days of attendance.

Missing school had been fatal to George WITLOCK, elder brother of Arthur. George made 7 grades in 9 years, having repeated grades one and two. He quit school in grade 9, after almost 11 years of school attendance, having missed twice as much days as his younger brother. - The same remarks apply to Emma SIBBESTON. She made 5 grades in 10 years, having repeated twice grades one and four. The girl missed more school days than the 3 boys together.

PARTIAL FAILURE: WHO IS TO BE BLAMED ?

These comparative figures afford some evidence that regular attendance and punctuality at school are important factors in the pupil's work and for his progress in learning. Qualifications of the teacher and classroom facilities are no substitutes for the little efforts of the pupils and his repeated absences at school. The criticisms raised in those years against the St. Margaret's School cannot be taken for granted, unless evidence is given that its alleged failures were due to the teachers and the school organization, not to the pupils themselves and their parents.

NEW SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN THE MAKING IN OTTAWA.

With the departure of Sister SARASIN in the summer 1947, an era of educational pioneering had come to an end. The framework of a new system of education for the Mackenzie was in the making in Ottawa. Dr. A. MOORE, Inspector, J.W. MCKINNON and R. A. HOEY, Director of the Indian Affairs Branch propounded a network of neutral schools before a Parliamentary Committee of the Commons and Senate (23). On certain matters, however,

Dr MOORE confessed that he had changed his views and went on saying: "...I do not think from the point of view of exposure to education, the day school is any better than the Residential School." - And he declared further: "...I thought that the private school did not have a place in the school scheme, but I have changed my mind quite radically on that... You see the monopoly that the State has in Canada as a whole, has his disadvantages too... I think a bit of competition is not a bad thing in school affairs..." (24). - Inspector MCKINNON was also cautious when the matter of religious instruction in the curriculum was raised before the Committee. He said: "...It would rather be a bit of irony after the Churches have done so much work, gratuitously most of the time, for us who have neglected the problem so long, to now tell them they have taught too much religion..." (25). It was left to the autocratic Director of the Indian Affairs Branch to dictate: "It is incumbent upon the Department to see that instruction other than religious is academic and neutral." - And further he ruled boldly that: "where a Catholic is in charge, it is designated a Catholic School... it just means that the teacher is to be of the same religious faith as the majority." (26) - The views expressed by those officials concurred with those of a portion of the population of Simpson. After their implementation at Hay River, those views began to materialize on this Island when a small group of Protestants disclosed a project of establishment of a neutral school. Meanwhile Sister C. CARON had come to replace Sister SARASIN at the St. Margaret's School. Twelve pupils enrolled in September, and 5 others registered later on.

DEPARTMENT IMPROVES THE SCHOOL PROGRAM.

A growing interest in the school program was shown by the Department then. Audio-visual equipment and other school materials were provided. Sister CARON received a copy of the book "Your food and Health" in October, copies of radio programs, and she was advised that two films could be borrowed monthly and would be sent free by the Department. (27) In 1948, charts and cards, chemistry equipment and a slide projector were forwarded to the St. Margaret's School. (28) - In August, the Government of the N.W.T. forwarded to the teacher a daily Register published by the Alberta Department of Education. The change indicated a trend towards the centralization of school organization under the authority of the Northern Administration. In forwarding the Register, Commissioner GIBSON, R.A., noted that it was a temporary expedient. Program of studies, enrollment forms and quarterly school reports were also sent by the same Department. (29)

CONFUSION AROUND THE St. MARGARET'S SCHOOL.

Some confusion remained, however, relative the function of the St. Margaret's School in the community. The Chief Education Division of the Indian Affairs Branch, Mr. P. PHELAN, observed in September 1949, that Sister PEDNAULT, the new teacher, was classified as an Indian Day Teacher. And shortly after, the Superintendent of Education of that Branch, Mr. B. NEARY, informed her of the monthly salary set at \$ 186.00. (30) On the other hand, Inspector MCKINNON informed Sister PEDNAULT in December that Basic Readers for grades 1, 2, and 3 and the annual school supplies order should be sent to his office. (31)

True, the teacher of the St. Margaret's School was the least concerned about the jurisdiction of the respective Departments over her School organization, as long as she could be provided with the necessary classroom supplies and equipment for her work and that of her pupils. The new Superior, Father V. PHILIPPE, had observed with interest however, the evolution taking place in the education field. The Catholic population numbered 475, while Protestants totalled 140. Two children of the latter group registered at the Catholic school in September 1949, while the others took private instruction rather than attend the St. Margaret's School. At the opening, 25 had enrolled, although 14 only continued for the main part of the school year. Sister PEDNAULT had 5 years of experience in Indian schools, 6 and a half years of teaching in provincial schools and some time spent in teaching anatomy and physiology in a Nursing Hospital. She was to be the first actor and observer in the initial crisis that struck the Catholic school in its organization and program. And it was the function of Father PHILIPPE to insure and protect the rights of Catholic education in the community.

OPENING OF THE NEW NEUTRAL SCHOOL.

On October 11th of that year 1949, 6 Catholic children registered at the new neutral school at its opening in the former CREEP'S store. Mr. T. BLEILER was the teacher and had a total attendance of 30 pupils. Under his leadership, extra-curricular activities, such as dances, scout and guide gatherings caught the attention of a large portion of the population. And from then on, meetings were held in the interest of education. Soon the main topic raised by the audience predominantly Protestant was: "There should be only one school in town." (32)

Father PHILIPPE, Superior of the Mission, and his assistant, Father J.M. LIZE had then begun the publication of a bulletin called "CONFLUENT WHISPERS". They made no mention of the activities going on among the promoters of the "one school" in the settlement. The December issue of the "Whispers" was also silent, except mentioning the visit of the school Inspector MCKINNON. The 3rd. issue of the Bulletin in March noted the burning down of the temporary local of the neutral school on February 13. The project of reconstructing a new building prompted their supporters to rally the Catholic population in favour of a large "one school" for the Community. Then as we have related in the first chapter, page 67, the Pastor of the Sacred Heart Mission observed an uneasiness among a portion of his flock. (33)

ATTACK ON THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

At the outset of the ensuing struggle for the maintenance of the Catholic School on the one hand and for its amalgamation in the one neutral school on the other hand, confusion may easily creep in the mind of the uninformed reader. True, there was need in the Community for a school acceptable to the Protestant conscience. Their promoters were justified in taking the necessary means for its establishment. The Catholic authorities might have been prepared to support them. In all fairness, however, the Protestant population could not require nor force the Catholic authorities and their flock to abandon their own school system: the only accep-

table to their right conscience. The strong reaction of Father PHILIPPE against the neutral school system prompted by a portion of the population shall be viewed in this light and not considered as an attack against the type of education wanted by Protestants for their own children. Misunderstanding and confusion were not raised by the Mission that struggled to maintain the long established Catholic education for Catholic children, but by the small group of persons who lacked respect for others' rights and minded others' business to achieve their own interests.

Taking for granted the sincerity of that small group, the writer cannot hide the fact that the project of closing down the St. Margaret's School to absorb the whole Catholic school population in a single neutral school, was an attack on the traditional principles and practices of the Catholic Church in educational matters. Thus, a war was initiated and waged in the Community around the St Margaret's School; and for a decade it was to develop frictions and dissensions that have not been healed as yet. Our readers are then cautioned to reserve their judgment on the events and persons involved in the history of local education in the course of the next 10 years.

CRISIS STRIKES THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL.

The new Indian Agent who replaced Mr. HARRIS was to take part in the drive for the "one school" at Fort Simpson. A resident of Fort Norman, Mr. L.C. HUNTER paid a visit to the Mission on March 24th, 1950. In the course of another visit in October, he indicated to Sister PEDNAULT that his Department was responsible for the education of her non-treaty pupils. Following a visit of the acting Inspector BAILEY, a Home and School Association was formed in the Settlement and on October 15th elected its executive: Mr. P. KELLY of the R. C.S.C. was chosen as president and Cpl. S. BYER of the R.C.M.P. as Secretary-Treasurer. Both were members of the Catholic Church. Father PHILIPPE gave a conditional support to the movement, "in an effort to work together and improve relations between all concerned...for the benefit of the whole of Simpson." (34) - The new school Inspector, Mr. H.R.LOW, visited Simpson on Nov. 12th and the newly constructed neutral school reopened on the 24th. The Pastor of souls worried then because a number of Catholic children discontinued at the St. Margaret's School to register at the other. They had taken occasion of the illness of Sister PEDNAULT who went to Edmonton for medical attention. Meanwhile Sister GREGOIRE took her place teaching to the remaining 8 pupils. But at mid-December, the St. Margaret's School was closed down. The Superior remained silent on the affair in the December issue of the "Confluent Whispers". In January 1951, all Catholic children attended the neutral school. Then Father PHILIPPE commented: "...efforts are made to get a teacher for the primary grades" (35) - Arrangements have been made with the consent of the parents to continue the teaching of religious instruction to their children. There were then 16 Catholic children out of a total of 32 under the direction of Mr. BLEILER, ranging from grade 1 to 8 inclusively. - The Home and School Association met on January 29th to discuss the new situation, as we have related in the first chapter. (36) While the project of a second classroom and teacher for the primary grades submitted to the Government was met with difficulties, Sister PEDNAULT returned from Edmonton to her functions. And on April 2nd, 13 children returned to the St. Margaret's School. By that time, the Superior of the Mission had decried the neutral school system which, he said, could not be satisfactory



Sr. Gamache & Pupils—1929



Sr. O. Sarasin & Pupils—1946



St. Margaret's School pupils—1948



Sr. C. Pedneault & Pupils—1953



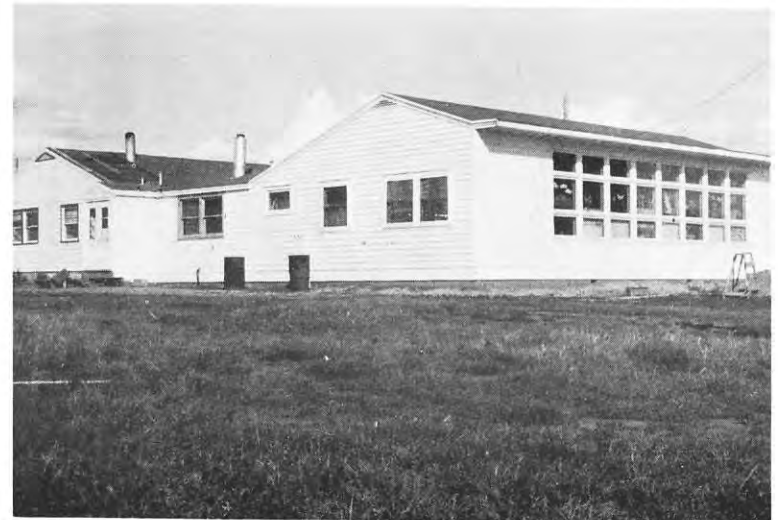
St. Margaret's School—1931 on lot 17



St. Margaret's School—1958



St. Margaret's School—1954



Federal Day School—Catholic Section Right
1956

to both Catholic parents and their children, adding that it will ever be more or less "godless". This calling stirred up the supporters of the neutral school. At the meeting of the Home and School Association on April 9th, the Rev. Mr. COOK, Anglican Minister, Mrs CRAIG and CREE voiced their protest against such an appellation by Father PHILIPPE. (38) The Superior explained afterwards that in using the word "godless", he spoke of a world-wide problem and exposed the teaching of the Church on the matter. (39) - At school the pupils busied with their work, being glad to be "back home", in spite of a shortage of material. The public school teacher, said Sister PEDNAULT, has taken mostly all my books and pencils while I was absent. (40)

"WE SHALL MIND OUR OWN BUSINESS, AND WE SHALL MIND IT."

Decidedly, the two schools had become stiff competitors, if not rivals, in a race for the education of a handful of Catholic children. At the opening of the school year in September 51, both institutions registered 15 pupils respectively. Since a number of Catholic children attended the neutral school, the Superior, Father DELALANDE thought advisable to give them religious instruction towards the end of the school day. He said, however, it was only a temporary expedient. (41) Following consultation with his flock, the Pastor adopted the policy that henceforth the Catholic school problems should be dealt with between Catholics only. Further, the attitude of non-interference with the school problems of others was deemed to be one of prudence in the present conditions. His advice to all concerned was: "We shall mind our own business, and we shall mind it."

PROLIFIC PERIOD OF COGITATIONS,

It is interesting to observe at this time the various and opposing projects that haunted the mind of a portion of the local population in those years. In 1948, there was a project of a State-owned and operated day school of undenominational character. In 1949, the project was amended to absorb in it the St. Margaret's School, and the erection of a second classroom for the primary grades. In 1951, the Home and School Committee proposed the establishment of a small hostel to accommodate the out-of-town children. At the same time, it was suggested that a residential school be established in the settlement under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Mission for the education of all Catholic children of the District between Fort Norman and Providence exclusively. (42) - By that time, came up also the project of a day school at Jean-Marie-River. (43) - A project of a kindergarten class under the auspices of the Government kept the attention of the Home and School Association. (44) That year 1951 was undoubtedly a prolific period of cogitations in the high circles of the town. After three years of that sort of planning, the projects were shelved for a while, and the people of Simpson faced the same grim reality of two competitive schools striving to educate their respective charges.

WARNINGS AND RELIGIOUS SANCTIONS.

Father DELALANDE kept a close eye on the situation, and in spite of occasional disappointments due to the teacher's illness, he stated in February 1952 that the St. Margaret's School was doing "good work". (45) He sensed however, that a large portion of his flock had not grasped the

true character of a Catholic school. In their confused mind, the imparting of religious instruction meant "Catholic education". In one of his Sunday sermons, the priest propounded the true character of Catholic education, and he explained the purpose and the function of a Catholic school, namely, the imparting of secular learning permeated with a christian spirit; this in accordance with the traditional principles and practices of the Catholic Church. At the same time he reminded the parents that their children had no need of the religious instruction and services provided by the non-Catholic Sunday schools since both were available at the St. Margaret's School and Sacred Heart Church. (46)

Yet, his instructions both privately and in public failed to produce convictions in the mind of a large portion of the Catholic population. Then, the Pastor had no other alternative than to pronounce unworthy of the Sacraments those parents who persisted in placing their children in a school other than that of their own religious faith. Therefore, in September of that year 1952, the Superior informed the individual parents of the sanctions of the Church against those who defied openly her laws in placing their own children in a school other than that of their religious faith. Four parents of ten children came under the sanctions. One parent only transferred their two children to the St. Margaret's School, while the three others persisted in their decision. The enrollment at the Catholic School was 14 pupils in October, ranging from grade 1 to 8 inclusively. It is significant that the Protestant teacher of the neutral school, Mr. D.B. LORD, raised his voice in defence of the disobedient Catholic parents and indulged in a condemnation of the Catholic authorities relative to the conferring of the Sacraments. (47) - Nevertheless, the opposition to the St. Margaret's School receded for a while, and the Mission personnel centered their care to the educational progress of the pupils and material improvement of the building.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AND MATERIAL IMPROVEMENT.

An increase in the teacher's salary and the payment of a \$ 200 Government grant per year made possible the modernization of the interior of the school and the enlargement of its facilities. A cloak room and a porch were added, while a handicraft room was built at the upper floor. Sister PEDNAULT, a professional musician playing piano, the violin and guitar, was then giving formal piano lessons to four youngsters, in addition to the regular classes in music and singing to the whole group. Encouragements was not wanting to the teacher and pupils. In September, they came from the new Superintendent of Schools, Mr. J.V. JACOBSON. In march 1953, Cpl. S. BYER and Mr. J. GILBEY brought their as they delivered talks to the class. Occasional visitors voiced their appreciation for the work done in that deserving institution. - A 16 mm Filmosound Projector and a tape recorder acquired by Father LIZE provided the school with varied entertainments and extra-curricular activities. Silent films and film strips supplied by the Department of education brought to the class additional means of education. Thus it may rightly be said that the center of Catholic education was discharging its primary and essential responsibility. A sign of his success may be seen in the example of Jimmy VILLENEUVE who passed very well a grade-8 test in June 1951. The boy was admitted at St. Thomas College in Battleford in September and made grade 9 there.

SISTERS WITHDRAW, LAY TEACHER SUCCEEDS.

The school year 1952-53 brought the end of teaching for Sister PEDNAULT. And she was the last Grey Nun to teach at the St. Margaret's School. The authorities of the Grey Nuns deemed it timely to discontinue the function, and to give Catholic lay teachers an opportunity of meeting on equal standing lay teachers of the other school, in the social life of the community. Perhaps unfair criticisms against the Catholic School that reflected on the abilities of the teaching Sisters may have convinced the Church authorities to accept the decision. The first victim of the change was an English man who arrived here in September 1953. A professional educator with some 24 years of teaching experience, Mr. W. Fellowes took his task to heart both in the class-room and in extra curricular activities. First with 20 pupils and then with 14 ranging from grade one to 8, the teacher was particularly exacting in fulfilling the daily schedule. His ambition in the second part of the year had been to prepare a selective group of his pupils for a Radio program over one of the CBC stations of Canada. Due to some difficulties, the project did not materialize.

"ADVISORY SCHOOL BOARD" PROMOTES CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

Mr. FELLOWES took an active part in the meetings of a group of Catholic parents on the Catholic school problems. The group had been organized in October under the name of "Advisory School Board" with the specific purpose of affording the parents and the teacher an opportunity to confer on the problems of their children. The members would at the same time be qualified representatives of the Catholic community in educational matters. And the "Advisory School Board" was soon called to protect and promote the interests of the Catholic school on the Island. A rapid retrospective glance at the local activities in educational matters for the past 5 years shows a concerted action in two opposite directions taken by the two groups imbued with two different philosophies of education. The one held for a secular education inspired with the Christian spirit, while the other wanted it divorced from denominational faith and practice.

THE PROBLEM OF THE "OUT OF TOWN" CHILDREN.

A glance at the future in the fall 1953 would have revealed some of the school problems which the "Advisory School Board" was to take under consideration. Those problems extended beyond the limits of the Island. Fort Simpson had then some 25 children at the Fort Providence Residential School that had a maximum capacity of 110 boarders. A complaint was made then by the Indian Agent of Yellowknife, Mr. KIRKBY, that Fort Simpson was unfair in sending so many children to the boarding school. (48) Further the Residential School authorities indicated that priority at their school should be given to the children of Fort Providence over those of other Settlements. And a maximum of 55 boarders was set for admittance of the latter group. Yet there were 125 children outside Providence in need of school facilities because their parents lived in scattered camps. The project of a Hostel at Fort Norman submitted to the Government in 1951 had been abandoned, while the new day schools at Fort Norman and Fort Franklin could not fill the need of their scattered school population. The idea of a boarding school in this town made its way again in this fall 1953. On the other hand, Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER was then making plans for the enlargement of the Fort Providence Residential School for the accomodation of all boarders from the surrounding district. (49)

BOARDING SCHOOL FACILITIES REQUIRED AT FORT SIMPSON.

At their meeting in early 1954 the members of the "Advisory School Board" studied the situation in relation to the interests of the Fort Simpson Catholic school population. By that time the question was raised as to whether the Fort Providence Residential School should be enlarged or a new boarding school should be built on this Island. The Vicar Apostolic deferred his decision on those problems pending further study of it.

Meanwhile the re-organized Department of Northern Affairs was giving an impetus to education in the Northwest Territories, and pressed for the solution of the problem of school facilities in the district of Simpson. In later summer 1954, the Minister of Northern Affairs, Mr. J. LESAGE, submitted general plans which included one for the erection of Hostels at Fort Simpson. (50) - Almost at the same time, a petition by the local Catholic population was made to the Minister responsible for Indian Affairs, Mr. J. PICKERSGILL, requesting more boarding facilities for the children of the surrounding area. The Catholic population of Fort Liard and Wrigley supported then the request and approval came from Fort Providence in favour of boarding facilities at Fort Simpson. (51) But soon much confusion surrounded the project and opened the way to multiple speculations and plans that set on their toes the leading portion of the population. The "Advisory School Board" was kept informed of the developments and initiated then a long and steady correspondence with the authorities of both the Government and the Church in view of clarifying the project as well as of giving guidance to the local Catholic population. In the opinion of the Fort Providence Residential School authorities, the new boarding facilities at Fort Simpson would not be available for children of Providence. The view was shared by the petitioners for more boarding school facilities. In his address at the Ottawa University on December 12 of that year 1954, the Minister J. LESAGE gave no precision on the school project at large. (52) - In November the Protestant population of the Settlement expressed their choice for undenominational boarding school facilities owned and operated by the Government. (53) - On the other hand, the Government plans were clear on three main points, as it was learned from official sources : 1) The erection of a Catholic Hostel under Catholic auspices and the closing thereof of the Fort Providence Residential School. 2) Another point was the erection of day classrooms in two wings for the education of Catholics and Protestants separately. 3) And the third point determined the responsibilities of a principal and vice-principal over the organization and discipline of their respective wings, or sections of the Federal Day School. (54)

At first Bishop TROCELLIER rejected the idea of closing down the Fort Providence Residential School. Afterwards, he considered it seriously and finally gave his approval to it. Yet, His Lordship was afraid of the deal, suspecting that he might be giving up the reality for its shadow. - Curious readers may find in the references further details of history relative to the Government school project. (55)

ACCOMODATION FOR THE INCREASING DAY SCHOOL POPULATION.

While plans for more boarding school facilities haunted and confused the minds of the local population, other plans were in the working by the Department of Northern Affairs to accomodate the increasing day school population in the settlement. In the fall 1954, the St. Mar-

garet's school authorities requested the Government to grant financial assistance for the enlargement and improvement of the building. (56) With and after the advice of the "Advisory School Board", the views of the Catholic population were sought on the project of erection of a second classroom to meet the educational need of the increasing local Catholic school children. A reply to the request indicated that additional facilities at Fort Simpson would be provided during the coming fiscal year. (57) And in April 1955, The project was announced for the construction of one-room addition to the present Federal Day School to accommodate the children of the St. Margaret's School. Since September 1954, Mr. Melv. GALLANT was the teacher at the Catholic School. Twenty two pupils were in attendance and an increase of some five pupils was foreseen for the next school year.

The new one-room addition was not ready for occupation at the opening in September. Then, MR. GALLANT and his 26 pupils continued to occupy the St. Margaret's School. Meanwhile, controversies aroused about the jurisdiction of the teacher Mr. GALLANT over the organization and administration of his class. Since April of that year, Mr. BLEILER had been appointed principal of the Federal Day School and he apparently claimed wide powers over the educational set-up in the whole area. Then, the "Advisory School Board" requested clarification from the Commissioner who replied shortly after. (59)

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION.

Earlier in the year, the group of Catholics acting as an "Advisory School Board" had taken the decision that a "Parent-Teacher Association" formed of Catholics would serve better the purpose of the local Catholic education. Since its first organization in 1949, the "Home and School Association" although opened to all people of the Settlement, was dominated by Protestant influences and was instrumental in all projects to close down the St. Margaret's School. The idea of forming a "Parent-Teacher Association" came in May from the Commissioner, Mr. G. ROBERTSON who wrote: "...I think it might be very helpful if you would give some consideration to forming a similar association among the Roman Catholic parents at Fort Simpson." (60) - The first Chairman of the new Association was Mr. Fred. SIBBESTON and Mrs. R. CHENIER Vice-Chairman, while Rev. Father LESAGE was to act as Secretary, and Cpl S. BYER as Treasurer. Rev. Father G. LAVIOLETTE, Superintendent of the Oblate Commission at Ottawa, was a guest at a meeting held on June 27, 1955. He delivered an address on school problems and Catholic Schools matters. At a general meeting held on August 7th, Cpl. S. BYER entertained the meeting with an address on "Responsibilities and Discipline" as factors of success in life. At subsequent meetings, it was agreed that Teacher-Aide would be employed to relieve Mr. GALLANT of some of the non-professional tasks in and out of the classroom, and that the official opening of the new Catholic Section of the Federal Day School would be held on January 5.

OPENING OF THE CATHOLIC SECTION OF THE FEDERAL DAY SCHOOL.

A joint meeting of the two associations convened on December 30 to organize the ceremony. Few days earlier Chief GAZON reported on his last visit to Ottawa before a packed crowd that heard him urge every one to get a better education. - We have related briefly on page 84 the ceremony that marked a new area in Catholic education on the Island. Except for a few days of confusion and rush, the transfer of the pupils from the old to the new school has caused little change in the organization and discipline of the

classroom. But, the teacher Mr. GALLANT remarked: "... with modern facilities now at our disposal, our work is made easier and the whole process of educating our children is simplified to a certain extent. (62)

SATISFACTION OF THE TEACHER AND HIS REPORT.

The teacher-aide, Mr. G. SABOURIN, instructed the boys in carpentering in addition to supervising teaching at the kindergarten class. And the closing of the school year was held on June 28th. In the words of the teacher, "it was the first successful completion of classes held in the new wing of the Federal Day School. We have been most happy in our new quarters, and we hope that the efforts we have made will bear fruits." - And when he was about to leave Fort Simpson, Mr. GALLANT continued: "I wish to extend my sincere thanks to all parents and friends for the co-operation and interest they have shown towards their school during the past two years. I have greatly enjoyed my stay with you and I will always cherish the memories of my sejour in Fort Simpson. To Father LESAGE, many thanks. I have greatly appreciated your countless efforts and kind co-operation. Education of our youth goes on in constant progression and new and better citizens are the products of today's schools. Education as a means of earning a living is essential; education as a means to a better and fuller enjoyment of life is also of paramount importance. But Christian education is primordial for the formation of the perfect man and Christian... So now it's Good-bye, good luck and smooth sailing." (63)

Honor roll for the school year 1955 - 1956 :

- Arithmetic: Grade 1A: Irene (Dolly) SIBBESTON
- Grade 1B: Gilbert LAFFERTY
- Grade 2 : Doris VILLENEUVE
- Grade 3 : Wendie SIBBESTON
- Grade 4 : Leonard VILLENEUVE
- Grade 6 : Nicholas SIBBESTON
- Grade 8 : William VILLENEUVE
- Attendance: Rosie HARDISTY and Nicholas SIBBESTON
- Good Conduct: Gilbert LAFFERTY and Betty BONNETROUGE
- Religious Instruction: Elsie NORWEGIAN
- Punctuality: Frank VILLENEUVE and Bertha SIBBESTON
- Spelling: Moise ANTOINE (Grade 3)
- Language: William VILLENEUVE (Grade 7) - (64)

PARTIAL AMALGAMATION UNACCEPTABLE.

The local Catholic school age population of Fort Simpson was then 95 children, i.e. from 6 years incl. to 15 incl. An enrollement of 26 was foreseen for the Catholic section of the school in September. In the course of the summer, information was given to the Parent-Teacher Association indicating that the Government would not approve of, nor pay for, the salary of a teacher-aide in that section of the school. On the other hand, a rumor had leaked from non-official sources intimating that a "combination of subjects" would be made for the pupils of higher grades in both classrooms. When informed of the project, the executive of the Parent-Teacher Association stated that it was unacceptable. (65) - By that time, the new teacher of the Catholic Section, Mr. A PASKELL, had been under misrepresentation thinking that the project

was the policy set by the Department and given overall approval. Further, the new teacher of the Protestant Section, Mr. J. ROBERTSON, had understood that his engagement allowed him to assume teaching to higher grades pupils, while Mr. A. PASKELL would teach the lower grades. (66) Both agreed however to maintain the 'status quo'.

There were enough indications, in my opinion, to believe that some moral pressure had been made by inferior officials of the Department to absorb indirectly and gradually into the neutral school system the pupils of the Catholic Section of the School. (67) Evidence of such a pressure was given at the N.W.T. Council meeting in January of this year 1956, when the Yellowknife member, Mr. J. PARKER, denounced the dual system of education at Fort Simpson, raised considerable opposition to it, and branded the project as "evil". Commissioner L.P. NICHOLSON of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, an appointed member of the Council, also raised opposition to what he called "segregation". Another member, Mr. J.W. GOODALL, also voiced his opposition to "segregation". However, he accepted the project saying that he was not satisfied but content. Mr. NICHOLSON agreed to it afterwards, because he said it was the Government policy. All other members of the Council approved of the plans under way for the dual system of education at the proposed enlarged Federal Day School. (68)

PRESSURE AGAINST SEPARATE CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

The moral pressure is also shown by the state of school affairs at that time in Simpson and surrounding district. The movement set in motion by Mr. A. MOORE for a network of neutral day schools in the Mackenzie was making its headway. One had been opened at Fort Liard at the beginning of the school year, although a year earlier both Ministers responsible for the affairs thought that the system had not proved to be satisfactory. (69) - The pressure for its establishment found a spokesman in John PARKER who propounded the need and benefits of a Day School at Fort Liard, basing his arguments on false figures. Writing in the "News of the North", PARKER stated that over 100 children of school age were without education at Fort Liard. The figures he said, were based on first hand observation. (70) In fact, there were only 52 between the age of 7 years and 16 inclusive in Liard area, and 9 others at Nahannee. (71) Thus, basing his argument on false figures, the spokesman for a network of neutral schools, showed the determination to prevent the establishment of facilities at Fort Simpson for the children of Fort Liard, who were counted in the plans. In raising this point, we do not question the reasons for the establishment of a day school at Fort Liard, but we do point out the pressure used with false figures to indirectly hinder the project of larger boarding facilities at Fort Simpson for a large number of Catholic children living in the scattered area of Fort Liard. A similar pressure had been used for the erection of a day school at Fort Wrigley. The history of the St. Patrick's School at Yellowknife in 1951 and afterwards, reveals the one and same views held by the Yellowknife representative and the opponent of Separate Catholic Education in the Mackenzie. "Early in the discussion, said Mr. PARKER, I formed the opinion that the Roman Catholic Church - not the Roman Catholic taxpayers - was anxious to secure as complete control as possible over the destinies of the Roman Catholic children of the Northwest Territories." (73) The Editor of the "News of the North" had sided with the Council member; and taking advantage of being a member of the

Catholic Church, he confused a portion of the public on an issue as clear as crystal in the minds of well informed Catholics of good standards. Said Mr.

HORTON : "We seem to have lost out in our battle against the establishment here of a Roman Catholic Separate School. But better a losing battle for a principle than no fight at all." (74)

While some opposition against the dual system of education and large boarding facilities at Fort Simpson had stiffened in 1956, the high Official of the Department proceeded with the purchase of land as a site for their original project. (75)

SCHOOL YEAR 1956 - 1957.

Locally, the tension relative to school matters appeared to have receded for a while. Mr. PASKELL was busy in his classroom with 26 pupils from kindergarten to grade 8 inclusive, with the assistance of Mr. G. SABOURIN as a teacher-aide. A native of South Wales, England, the Catholic teacher was holding a first class certificate and had 8 years of experience in teaching. At the end of the first term, Mr. PASKELL reported that "most children are producing satisfactory work at their different levels, but some are below standard and must contribute more effort. Some pupils are losing much time, and this has an adverse influence on their progress. There is an appalling amount of lateness among several pupils." (76)

The mixing on the playgrounds of the two groups of children was marked with the friendliness normal among children of that age. Except for a few flairs-ups between unruly children, no trouble had been reported to the fact of their separation for teaching in their respective classrooms. In the course of that year 1956, a project sponsored by the Parent-Teacher Association brought to a test the wisdom of the administrative policy of the dual classroom system. The executive of the Catholic group, having collected funds for the purchase of a Filmosound projector and a large screen, requested the Department for a 50% grant in payment of the audio visual aide. In the mind of the Association, the equipment would be for use by both sections of the school and also by the St. Margaret's Hospital for the patients and by the R. C. Mission as well. In the meantime, rules for the use and custody of the visual aides equipment had been passed by the Department. (77) Since the Parent-Teacher Association had reserved the right to custody of the projector, they refused the deal because the rules had conferred that right to the Principal of the School. Then the Commissioner refunded the \$ 350.00 that had been paid by the Association for 50 % of the cost of the equipment. (78) The Department bought however the Filmosound Bell and Howell projector type 185 for use of the school and any other organization in the community, subject to the rules above mentioned.

In March 1957, Mr. PASKELL reported an improved attendance of his pupils although late arrivals still disturbed the work of the school. At the test held during that month, 19 pupils gained a pass while 6 failed to obtain a satisfactory percentage. Here are the names of those who passed with the highest marks in their respective grades:

Grade 9: Leonard HOPE - 73%	Grade 2: Dolly-Irene SIBBESTON-64%
Grade 3: Betty BONNETROUGE - 68%	Grade 3: Norman MERCREDI - 62%
Grade 7: Theodore HOPE - 65%	Grade 5: Albert MOSES - 61%
Grade 7: Nicholas SIBBESTON - 64%	

In march also, Mr. J.W. GOODALL, Council member, addressed a public meeting of the Parent-Teacher Association in the St. Margaret's Hall before a crowded audience of some 60 persons. In accepting the invitation, Mr. GOODALL, an old timer, who had observed for several years the work done by the Catholic institution in the community may have wanted to show his appreciation for it. In addition to a report on some of the deliberations of the last Council, he outlined the Government program for both academic and vocational education.

At about the same time, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories announced the preparation of plans and specifications as well as a site investigation in view of the erection of the Central School Unit in the Settlement. (79)

THE TEACHER-AIDE EXPERIMENT.

In September, the school enrollment reached its highest peak in the history of Fort Simpson. There were 32 children in the Catholic Section and 30 in the other. 27 went to the Fort Providence Residential School and 17 were registered at the Jean-Marie-River school. Miss K. MCGUINNESS was in charge of the Catholic Section, assisted with Miss S. LAFLEUR as a teacher-aide. The employment of teacher-aides was a new policy adopted then by the Government. In 1956, the Director of the Northern Administration had declined to establish the function for fear that requests for other schools might be made. The Commissioner thought that financial appropriation to pay the salary of a teacher-aide could not be made for the school year 1957-58. (80) However, an experiment was made that year with one in each classroom. Both had a junior high school education and were given a brief orientation prior to their coming to Fort Simpson.

The employment of teacher-aides had been experimented for some years in America. It was sought as a remedy in crowded classrooms and also because of the multiplying "inroads made on the teacher's time by subprofessional activities." Teacher-aides are a type of persons with interest in the problems of education yet lacking the professional training required of a teacher. They assist by performing non-instructional duties. They spend part of the school day in activities such as supervision in and out of the classroom, filling in forms, preparing reports, checking attendance and alike. Most teachers, who have worked with teacher-aides, state that they would rather teach larger classes with an aide than the customary 30 pupils without an aide. (81) The experiment was worth trying in both classrooms of our Federal Day School. But it was soon put to a test as well as the functioning of the dual system.

DISCIPLINARY INCIDENT.

In late September, the teachers and their aides were faced with the problems of disciplinary offences out of the classrooms by a few pupils. When the matter of sanction was raised to the offenders, a warning indicated that punishment by strapping would be imposed by the Principal of the School. Since the latter was a Protestant, some Catholic children raised objection saying that their own teacher alone should impose the sanction of strapping. Incidentally, one of them asked me the question during the period of religious instruction whether their teacher or the principal was responsible for strapping them. My answer was: "Corporal punishment such as strapping and the like should be given by the respective teachers to their pupils." (82) But I was unaware of the whole affair

behind the question asked by the child. The latter must have reported incorrectly my answer, since the Principal of the School, Mr. T. HEPBURN wrote letters to the Chief of education, Mr. J.V. JACOBSON, in which he complained of my interference in the conduct of the school. Moreover, he stated that the Catholic teacher, Miss K. MCGUINNES, complained that I had contradicted her after she had explained to her pupils the disciplinary rules of the school. The Commissioner, Mr. G. ROBERTSON, had taken the case and he deemed it necessary to ask the Mt. Rev. J.M. TEOCELLIER, my Bishop, that I be requested to cease interfering in the conduct of the School." (83) Informed of the whole affair, I explained to the Commissioner my version of the case, and I soon received from him a letter of appreciation and the expression of his pleasure that the "the actions attributed to me were not, in fact, taken by me." Further he asked the Superintendent of Education, Mr. J.V. JACOBSON, to convey the information to those concerned." (84) - The incident was closed, but it had given further indications of the vulnerability of the local dual school system, if and when the promoters of the 'one school' policy take any opportunity to press their own views in this matter.

PLANS OF THE CENTRAL SCHOOL UNIT DISCUSSED AT OTTAWA.

A previous indication of such a pressure had been evidenced in May of that year 1957, when the plans of the large school unit at Fort Simpson were prepared in Ottawa by some Government Officials. During a visit in an Ottawa office of the Northern Administration, on May 10, I happened to see a preliminary sketch of those plans. An attentive inspection of the dayschool drawings showed that all ten classrooms were located in one block at the one end of the building and the gymnasium at the other. Such a disposition of the classrooms was a change in the Government plans which had provided for their separation by the gymnasium. Moreover, both sides of the classrooms with windows were exposed to the North and South winds of the long and cold winter. When the Commissioner had been informed of those anomalies, he instructed his assistant, Mr. F.J. CUNNINGHAM, to call a meeting of the Officials of the Administration for the purpose of investigating the explanations for the change and of correcting the drawings. The conference took place on June 12 and was presided over by Mr. CUNNINGHAM under the instructions of the Commissioner. Those present were the Director of the Northern Administration, Mr. SIEVERTZ, the Chief of Education, Mr. J.V. JACOBSON, and seven others including myself. Mr. CUNNINGHAM enunciated first the policy of a dual set of classrooms and wanted to know who had instructed the drawings of the plans at variance with the Government policy. Having received no answer to that question, he directed the architect to make the necessary redressments in the plans. (85) All present were given the opportunity to express their views and make suggestions not only for the classrooms but also for the two Hostels. After two hours, the new plans were agreed upon by all present. Mr. CUNNINGHAM told the conference that following consultation of the authorities concerned, the plans would be submitted to the Minister of Northern Affairs for final approval.

CATHOLIC AND PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

One may speculate as to the reasons that prompted some Officials of the Department to direct the drawing of plans at variance with those of the Government. The only speculation that occurs to my mind is that another attempt has been made to implement the plans of those who promoted

the 'one school' system at Fort Simpson. An attentive observer of the underlying forces at work in that direction for the past 10 years, is at liberty to draw the same conclusion. In fact, there is nothing new in that. Moreover, it is a well known fact of history, that a large portion of non-Catholics in Canada and in the whole world have considered and do consider yet as "evil" the segregation of Catholic children from those of other religious persuasions. Historians other than of Catholic Faith have sometimes observed that cries of segregation have often exploded from fear of the increasing influence of the Catholic Church. (86) True, cries of sectarian segregation, splitting educational efficiency, waste of money, undemocratic system and alike do not always explode from that fear. They are sometimes prompted by fear that the Catholic system might harm the public school system. Yet the seat of trouble appears to be in the division of Christians between Catholics and Protestants. The latter can hardly have, even if they wanted, a secular education permeated with a Christian spirit in accordance with their own separate faiths, while the former may have it, and they want it. It has been questioned at times and in some quarters whether Catholics want separate Catholic schools for their children. And there is a widespread opinion that they have grown weary of them. Almost a century ago, the opinion was voiced by a spokesman saying: "I am satisfied they would now be willing that their children should get their education along with the children of the rest of the community, without any fear that their respect for their own religion would be interfered with, or their conscience injured. I trust the day will come when they will all take the right view of it, and the question with them with reference to education may be not to what church they may belong, - but how their children may receive the best education, and grow up with other youth in peace and harmony." (87) That is a sophisticated opinion. History has given ample evidence that most Catholics are not weary of their schools and that they are determined to have and maintain them in accordance with the traditional principles and practices of their Church. (88)

Apart from the majority, there is a minority of Catholics who yield to the sophisticated opinion that is widespread among non-Catholics. Due consideration being given to their ignorance of Catholic education and of its requirements, there is a feeling of inferiority (call it inferiority complex) that adulterates the mentality of this class of Catholics. In that summer 1957, the Editor of the "News of the North" had once more exemplified that sort of mentality, as he came to the fore in view of depreciating the Fort Simpson dual school system. Writes HORTON: "At Fort Simpson, there are in effect two schools both in the same building and both teaching the same grades, one side being R.C. and the other non-denominational. Efforts to build a fence down the middle of the playgrounds to divide the R.C. and the other children are said to have been halted early in the game; but did you know there are two sets of toilets provided for the school, 'biffies' for the Catholics and others for the others..." (89) - The Catholic Editor who had battled for 5 years against the Catholic school appears to wallow in an atmosphere of vulgarity, instead of heightening his mind to the level of Catholic principles and practices in educational matters. According to psychologists, artifices are the tools of the ignorant to conceal their ignorance, and of the ugly to conceal their ugliness. One artifice of the ignorant Catholic, who happened to be learned in secular knowledge, is often the voicing of bold and flappy words in face of anti-Catholic pronouncements. Is not such an abject submission of mind, a display of inferiority complex? As for the assertion made by the Editor that efforts were made to build a fence of separation between the two school groups, it is as inaccurate as some of his other pronouncements.

The problem of a fence was raised in 1955 at a meeting held at the school and presided by Mr. F.J. CUNNINGHAM. When the latter submitted a site-plan for the prospective Central School Unit in the Settlement, suggestions were submitted by those present. As Mr. CUNNINGHAM outlined a grand proposal for a large football rink at the back of the two Hostels for the use of the public, I expressed some concern relative to ensuing difficulties of maintaining order and discipline at that particular location, for use also by boarders of the Catholic Hostel. Elaborating further on the problem, I emphasized that methods of discipline particular to Religious Sisters charged with the supervision of Catholic boarders, must not be disregarded, and thence freedom on the playgrounds should be insured for the orderly maintenance by the supervising Sisters of their particular methods of discipline. Consequently, my suggestion was to make allowance for a lane between the respective playgrounds at that location in order to insure such a freedom. As cries of segregation exploded at the idea of more segregation, I pointed out that the responsibilities of the respective authorities over respective groups of children deserved serious consideration. Then Mr. GILBEY thought it advisable to build a service road between the playgrounds at that location in order to insure respect of the respective responsibilities in the matter. (90) Anyhow, the problem was dropped. It is clear that the vulgar allegations made "off efforts to build a fence" of separation were the product of minds bent to confuse issues, if not to mislead uninformed people.

MEANWHILE, NORMAL CONDUCT OF EDUCATION.

Unaware of such tractations around the local school system, the parents of Fort Simpson at large and the Catholics in particular could observe only the normal conduct of education of the children in the community. Religious instruction was given daily to two separate groups in the Catholic Section, during the last school half-hour. A series of Catholic readers were used by the elementary grade pupils. At Christmas, all children of both sections presented a joint program of entertainment for the whole population. Throughout the winter, Miss MCGUINNES conducted classes of sewing and knitting with the assistance of Sister CHAMPAGNE (or vice-versa) at the Nurses' Residence for the school girls. Early in the spring, a display of the handicraft works was made at the St. Margaret's Hall.

COMPROMISE AS TEMPORARY SOLUTION.

The assistant Superintendent of Schools, Mr. J. CAIRN, made the regular inspection towards the end of February. He expressed then the opinion that the increasing number of pupils in both classrooms was imposing too hard a task on the teachers and their aides. Accordingly, he said, the pupils in higher grades were deprived of the attention they were in need of. It was apparent that the inspector would recommend the organization of a third classroom and the employment of a third teacher to meet what he called "the growing educational need". Following a consultation on the problem, I insisted that a thorough assistance by the teacher-aides could satisfy those needs for one more year, and thus avoid any change that might easily cripple the Catholic education of a number of children entitled to its full benefits. When the educator insisted that, in his opinion, the teacher-aide system was not satisfactory, I suggested that, if necessary, a third classroom to accommodate all first grade pupils irrespective



R.P. F. LeCoat



R.P. J. Adam



R.P. H. Posset



R. Fr. C. Clacys



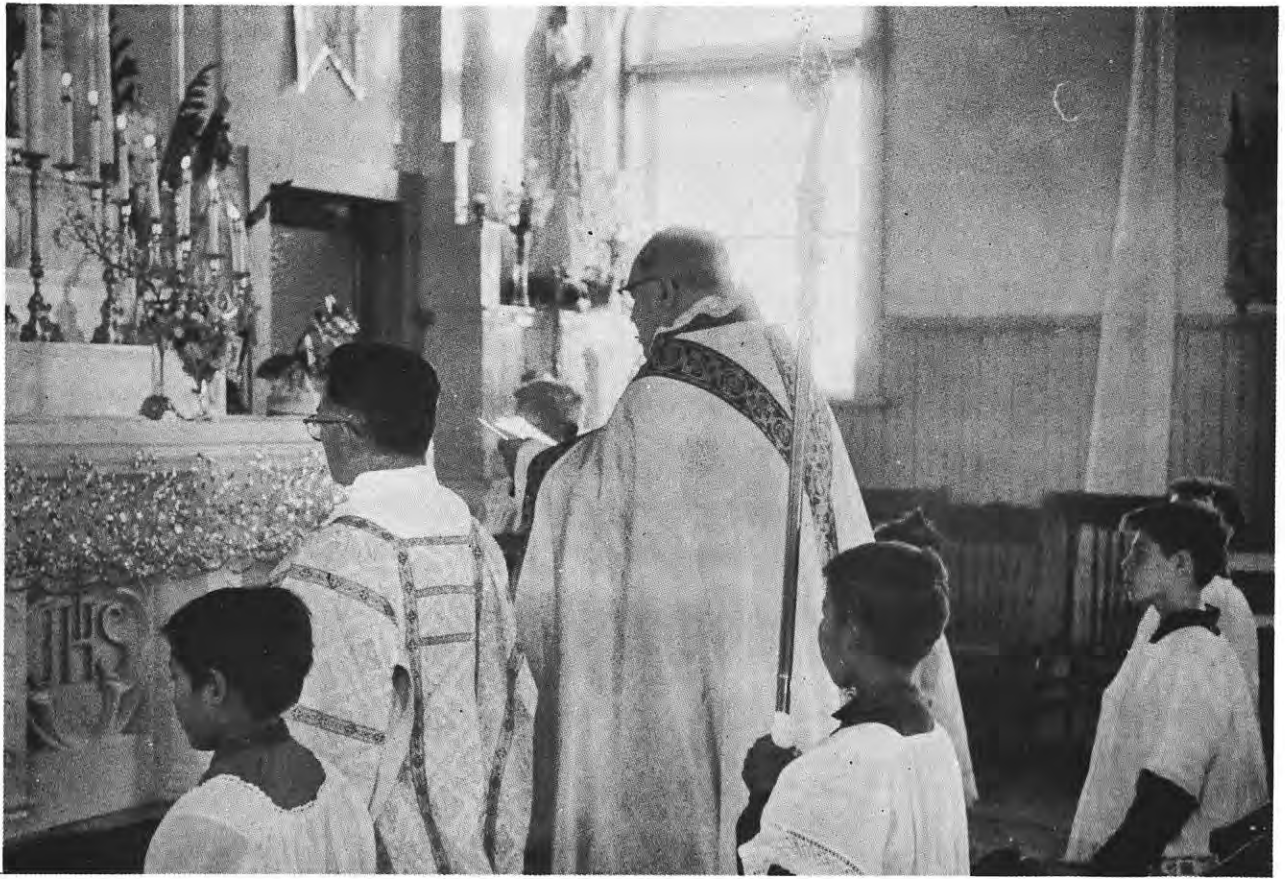
R. Fr. L. Bruyere



R. Fr. M. Turgeon



M. A. Gaillard



S. Exc. Mgr J.-M. Trocellier, Grand'Messe – 17 août 1958



Cérémonie au Cimetière – 19 août 1958

of their religious faiths might be considered as an acceptable temporary solution. Assurance however, should be given, that the arrangement would in no way prejudice the establishment of the dual system of education which has been previously agreed upon. (91) In April, the Director of the Northern Administration, Mr. SI VERTZ submitted a proposal for the amalgamation of the grades 6 to 9 of both classrooms in a third one of neutral character. In June, Assistant Deputy Minister, Mr. F.J. CUNNINGHAM announced an arrangement for teaching all first grades in a third classroom and the immediate construction of a separate building for that purpose. Assurance was given that it will not prejudice the establishment of the dual system of education which has been previously agreed upon. (92) - By that time, there were 58 Catholic children of school age whose parents resided in the Settlement. Those were eligible for attendance at the Catholic section in September, although 10 of them were at the Fort Providence Residential School during the 1957-1958 school year. Since 7 others would most likely enroll at the Protestant Section, there were left 51 Catholic children entitled to Catholic school facilities, under the new arrangement. At the close of school in June, Miss McGUINNES and her aide Miss LAFLEUR had only 30 pupils in their classroom. The teacher-aide system had also come to a close. The experiment that had the favour of Mrs. GALLANT and PASKELL did not appear to satisfy Miss McGUINNES nor the Officials of the Government. Most Catholic parents showed little concern or interest about it. The progress of their children appear to have been normal during the year. Experts could have easily found faults with the organization of the school work and conditions. Yet, as close observers of local education, we are bent to believe that limited progress on the part of some children is mainly due to their limited efforts and to the limited co-operation of their parents.

HOSTELS CONSTRUCTION IN VIEW.

Some fear had been expressed in early summer 1958, that a change of Government might affect the project initiated by the former Government for a Central School Unit at Fort Simpson. Assurance had been given by the Conservatives that no change would be made in the program and the Commissioner announced towards the end of March that tenders for the construction would be called in April. Mr. GOODALL, Member of the Northwest Territories Council, received then confirmation that large scale construction would certainly be under way in 1959. (93)

SATISFACTORY SOLUTION.

Meanwhile, the construction of a third classroom was started in early summer. Yet, completion was not reached until September 22nd. The two senior classrooms that opened on the 3rd, had a registration of 21 and 28 pupils respectively. Mr. HEPBURN, principal and teacher in the Protestant Section, taught the children from grade 4 to 9 inclusive, while Miss S. KINGSTON had been engaged to teach grades 3 to 9 in the Catholic Section. Miss KINGSTON had arrived on August 28th from Chatham, New Brunswick; also Miss J. McDONALD a Montrealer who came to teach the patients at the St. Margaret's Hospital. Both were welcomed in St. Margaret's Hall at a public gathering of the Parent-Teacher Association. - Miss McGUINNES who had travelled and holidayed across Canada returned later and was assigned to the un-envied function of teaching 39 pupils of grades 1-3 in the third classroom to be conducted in an undenominational manner. Her task was soon considered as too heavy. Then plans were made to em-

ploy a 4th teacher and split the group and the grades. By that time, officials of the education division, had discovered a miscalculation of the local school age population which had been underestimated (94) The new Superintendent of Schools Mr. W.J. BOOTH, was at hand in early October to confer on the situation and take a decision on the redistribution of grades and pupils. At the end of his visit, he had come to the following arrangement: all 86 children would be taught by 3 teachers and divided by grades in 3 classrooms irrespective of their religious denomination.

The arrangement had been worked out on Monday October 6th, with the assistance and approval of the teachers: Mr. D. HEPBURN, Misses S. KINGSTON and K. McGUINNES. The Superintendent appeared to be very happy about the solution, since he told me the next day that all the people of Fort Simpson approved of it. Having called at the Mission for my support, Mr. BOOTH thought that unanimous consent should be had to carry out the arrangement. Great was his surprise when he learnt that, in my opinion, the solution was unacceptable to the right Catholic conscience. It is significant that the Educator, although he had thought of no other arrangement, agreed on the following one: All 47 Catholic children would be split by grades in two classrooms, while the 39 others would be also split in two groups. Mr. D. HEPBURN, who was present at the interview, agreed also to the solution and both were prepared to recommend it to the Ottawa authority.

A week later, the Superintendent confirmed his views stating that he had requested Ottawa to authorize the rental of the St. Margaret's Parish Hall for the extra-classroom. And he announced at the same time the coming of Mr. Allan COOKE as a teacher-aide. (95) - Within a week, the request was granted by Ottawa and preparations were made for the opening of the 4th classroom on the 24th of that month. Meanwhile, arrangements were made locally to transfer Miss KINGSTON from the senior Catholic class to the junior Protestant class, while Mr. A. COOKE who arrived on the 24th, was assigned to that classroom for teaching Catholic pupils of grades 3 to 9. Miss McGUINNES was shifted to the new classroom for teaching grades 1-2 Catholic pupils. Mr. HEPBURN's senior Protestant class remained unchanged. Thus was implemented the last arrangement which insured the dual system of education. It solved at the same time the problem of teaching religious instruction to the Catholic children of the respective classrooms. (96) And it made easier the imparting of religious instruction to Protestant children in their classrooms. Arrangements were made for two Protestant representatives to alternate teaching of religion in the two classrooms.

It appears however, that the whole set-up satisfied only a small portion of non-Catholics, as is evidenced by a petition circulated among the people of Fort Simpson a few months later. (97)

JUDICIAL STATUS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

This latter move by the promoters of the "one school" in the Settlement is an incident of history beyond the period set for the writing of this 'Historical Sketch'. Suffice it to observe the continuous trend in the struggle of Catholic education which reveals at least a deep misunderstanding, if not a gross ignorance, of its basic philosophy and irrefragable implications on the part of the major portion of the whole local population.

No wonder then, that the clash of ideas recedes only for a time and goes on anew at the first opportunity. It is such a source of friction as to discourage honest people who sincerely want mutual understanding and respect for rights. Much of the misunderstanding arises from a misconception of the right to a Catholic school in a community. Hence the question: Who has a right? The individual Catholic, or the Catholic community as a class of persons?

The reader may have overheard an individual Catholic say: "I don't want my kids segregated from the others at school." - Or another: "I have signed the petition to amalgamate the classrooms and have ONE school in the Settlement." - Still another: "The Catholic school taxes being too high, I send my kids to the other school." - Thus, those 3 individual Catholics pose the problem of duties towards the Catholic school, and thence their right to it, as well as freedom of choice of schools for their children.

In 1913, a man by the name of FARLEY, living in Limberg, Sask., wanted his children to attend the local Catholic school, and asked that his taxes be paid to that school instead of to the public school. FARLEY was denied that right and his case went to the 'Court of Appeal'. Justice A.J. FARRELL dismissed the appeal and said to FARLEY: "Unless and until you become a PRACTISING Catholic, you have no right to vote for a Catholic school and you are not a supporter of that school." (98) FARLEY then a non-practising Catholic may be refused admittance of his children to the Catholic school. His case applies only in school districts, yet it serves as a norm for the guidance of the legislator in similar cases in the Mackenzie. In other words, under the civil law, individual Catholics who are not practising members of the Catholic Church, have no say in matters pertaining to a Catholic school. In practical application, it means that their vote, or their petition, or whatever they say relative to the organization and administration of a Catholic school, is void and null, and may be considered by any authority to be of no avail, and rightly so, in general terms only, of course.

This point may be argued. Yet, should a case be taken to the Courts, a non-practising Catholic would be declared one who does not represent the views of, nor speak for the interest of a Catholic school in a community. In general terms again, it may be said that individual Catholics of good standard do not either represent the views of, nor speak for the interests of a local Catholic institution. Again, we find in Canadian jurisprudence in school matters rulings and decisions which give to 'a class of Catholics' all the rights to and for a Catholic school in a community.

In 1917, the Privy Council has ruled in the case of the Ottawa S.S. Board vs McKELL that Roman Catholics together form a class of persons and that the class of persons to whom the right or privilege is reserved must be a class of persons determined according to religious belief. (99) From this ruling, we gather that to the class of persons called Roman Catholics is reserved the privilege or right relative to a Catholic school... and not to the individual Catholics. Further, Catholics who form that class of persons shall be practising members of the Catholic Church. It appears then, under the civil law and in general terms, that a group of practising Catholics alone may speak and act for the Catholic institution in the community. In practical application then, as the reader may easily conclude, the views and acts of 'supposed-to-be-Catholics' are of no avail in local Catholic school matters. Thence, it is understandable that

well-informed Government Officials will ignore in fact the views and representations made by individual Catholics of good standard in Catholic school matters, if and when their views and representations are at variance with those of their Church in such matters. Moreover, the Government may overlook completely the views and representations of non-Catholics who interfere in the rights and privileges of the Catholic school represented by the class of Catholics of good standing in the community.

An example may better serve our purpose to clarify this particular aspect of the problem. The total voters of Catholic faith in the Settlement number about 100. Among them, 20 are not practising members of the Church in the sense explained before. Among the other 80, who are considered of good standing, 50 of them decide to oppose the separation of Catholic children in the classroom for secular teaching. They join force with the 20 non-practising ones to sign a petition to that effect, and thus leave only 30 Catholics in favour of the maintenance of the Catholic classroom in the local Federal Day School. Eventually, the Church authority may decide to refuse the Sacraments to the 50 members of the Church who have acted against the law governing Catholic education. And thence, the remaining 30 members of the Church will be the only ones entitled to speak and act for or against the maintenance of the Catholic classrooms in the Federal Day School. This latter group is the class of persons, under civil law and jurisprudence in school matters, that has rights and privileges relative to a Catholic school in the community.

During the past ten years, this particular aspect of school matters has been overlooked by a number of members of the Catholic Church who have made pronouncements or taken action at variance with the traditional principles and practices of their Church, in matters pertaining to the local Catholic school. Moreover, their pronouncements and actions have been much overestimated by the supporters on the 'one school' who sought to strengthen their project of closing down the St. Margaret's School, and thence of amalgamating the classrooms at the Federal Day School. Neither group need be surprised when its pronouncements and actions have been ignored or overlooked by the higher authority of the Government. Those who hope (in vain) to absorb Catholic schools or classrooms completely within the common system by dividing the members of our Church from their priests may well learn from the lessons of Canadian History. "Be assured that no system of popular education will flourish in a country which does violence to the religious sentiments and feelings of the Churches of that country." RYERSON who was not tender towards the Catholic system of schools branded a stern warning to those officials whose policy is to reduce by regulations the effective operation of Catholic schools, saying: "You will soon find that the religious persuasions (R.C.) will commence establishing schools of their own." (100) - In fact, this has taken place in the United States and has defeated the purpose of a Government which has the power to control the education of every child. Says WEIR: "The State may, in its policy, go too far. Does it achieve the object? the answer is NO. In the United States, one and half a million Catholics do not attend State Schools." (101)

Inspired by her wisdom and experience, the Church has foreseen this eventuality at Fort Simpson and has set aside a portion of land for the location of a prospective private school, if and when conditions warrant its establishment.

Meanwhile, the present arrangements, which give complete charge of the organization and discipline of the Catholic Section to its senior teacher, prove to work satisfactorily in spite of occasional difficulties. They will continue to do so, in the larger unit, as long as the regulations setting out the respective responsibilities for both the administration and organization of the whole school are respected and honestly enforced. Under those regulations, a principal has the overall responsibility for the administration of the school, but will not interfere with the organization and discipline of the separate wings under the jurisdiction of the assistant-principals. The Assistant-Principal will be in complete charge of his wing in so far as its organization and discipline are concerned. Moreover, the Principal, (who may be a Catholic or a Protestant) will act as liaison-officer in so far as the relationships between the two parts of the school are concerned. (102)

Fort Simpson is fortunate to have at this time a system of education that may satisfy both groups in the community, as they both are provided facilities to educate their respective children in accordance to their right conscience and as they think fit. In the large school unit, the system will be improved, as the large number of pupils will make it possible for each section to have its respective grade-school. Part of our good fortune is due to the prospective attendance at the larger Day School of some 200 children from the surrounding districts. Their number will in fact double that of the local day school population for some years to come.

The largest group of Catholic pupils will come from Fort Providence. The people of that Settlement have been called to sacrifice their 80-year-old Catholic institution for the benefit of the Catholic population of the whole district. And the authorities of the Residentiak School have been required to transfer their personnel to the new institution for the improvement and progress of Catholic education as a whole in this portion of the lower Mackenzie. The people of Simpson, and the Catholics in particular, need be appreciative of the long and worthy work performed by the Fort Providence Residential School, and bear in mind that its contribution has made possible larger establishments which will soon bring their good fortune in the field of education, and other fields as well.

GLANCE OVER THE "PIONEERING AGE".

As we glance back at the 40 years of Catholic education in the Settlement, we observed with mingled feelings the work achieved by its supporters, by the teachers and their pupils. A period of 30 years has marked what may be called a "Pioneering Age" of learning and training in elementary education. For the first 20 years, the St. Margaret's school has quietly discharged its primary function with the little means at the disposal of the pupils and their teachers, concentrating on the primary grades with a minimum of children. Working at a slow and intermittent tempo, the pupils of both treaty and non-treaty status were initiated to the treasure of knowledge. For the 10 following years, as the facilities and the equipment improved, the St. Margaret's School increased its slow pace of development in higher grades and secondary school activities, attaining what may be called the age of adolescence, an age which spells crisis and struggle in its development and progress. Such was the period that followed 1948 up until this day. When the St. Margaret's School had reached a better stage of organization with Government assistance and under its benevolent control, it met first competition and thence opposition with occasional

threat of ceasing to exist. When competition began effectively in 1949 with the opening of a Government owned and operated school of undenominational character, the Catholic population was unaware of, and little interested in the ensuing struggle around their school, while the Catholic authorities were hardly prepared to meet the challenge of evolution taking place in the local field of education and the social field of **community**. As the opposition stiffened to close down the St. Margaret's school, new factors arose that hastened an evolution which perhaps was overdue in the organization of the local Catholic education. One factor, if not the main, was the impetus given, in 1954, by the new Minister of Northern Affairs to the education in the Mackenzie and at Fort Simpson in particular. Another factor was the determination of the Catholic Church authorities to adapt the Catholic school institution to the changing conditions, and clearer views of the respective responsibilities of the Church and the State in face of the evolution taking place in the community and the whole district. - 1956 witnessed the first step of that evolution when the dual system of local education was implemented at the enlarged Federal Day School, under a set of specific regulations for the administration and organization of the school. As the clash of ideas kept a portion of the people on their toes, the struggle around the maintenance of the dual system at the Federal School, present and future, only sharpened the division among the whole population, without achieving any change in it. By the end of 1958, when the construction of the school unit began with clear indications of the original Government policy and projects being carried out, the challenge to Catholic education in its evolving adaptation was kept alive yet by the promoters of the 'one school' on the Island. And there are reasons to presume, in the opinion of the writer, that the struggle will continue with chronic resurgence until "one might oust another"; but in the words of the Protestant W.P. PERCIVAL, author of the Book "Shall All We Think Alike" : "...such a process will take a very long time and would efface that attractive picture that many of us have formed of a composite Canadian Nation that will arise from the joint stock of all those splendid human elements, that comprise this young, eager, and extremely virile country." (103)

Meanwhile and glancing forward into the future, we indulge in foreseeing times when the young generation of children of this town and district will grow peacefully in wisdom and ability, although educated apart, in accordance with their right conscience, while their parents although different by their language, race and religion, will live in mutual understanding, sympathy and goodwill. Otherwise, our hope in the future of Fort Simpson shall be frustrated, and much of our common achievement shall be done in vain. Because, (we paraphrase PERCIVAL's observations) for one portion of the town to set itself up as greater than another, for one to act in a snobbish manner towards the other, for one group to despise or even frown upon the other, for one segment of the citizens to consider that all others must think alike in school matters, ... is to besmear and perhaps to eradicate the hope of greatness which is foreshadowed by the factors of development resident in this section of our land.



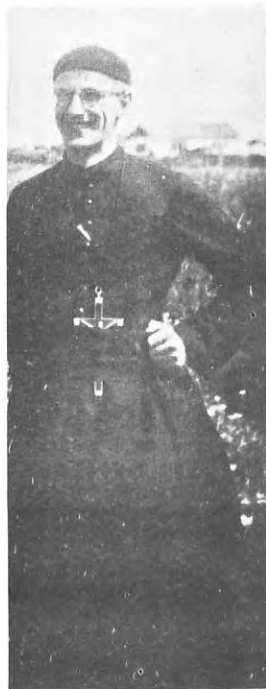
Rt. Rev. P. Fallaize



Father G. Houssais



Father A. Feuvrier



Father J. Dessy

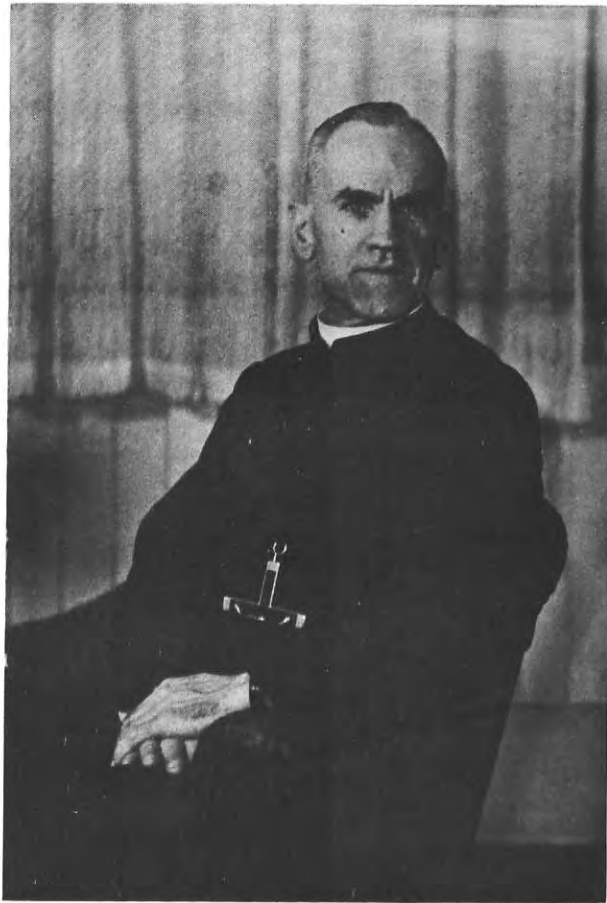


Fathers J. Lize and A. Vermaut

SUPERIORS



Father A. Gathy, 1935-41



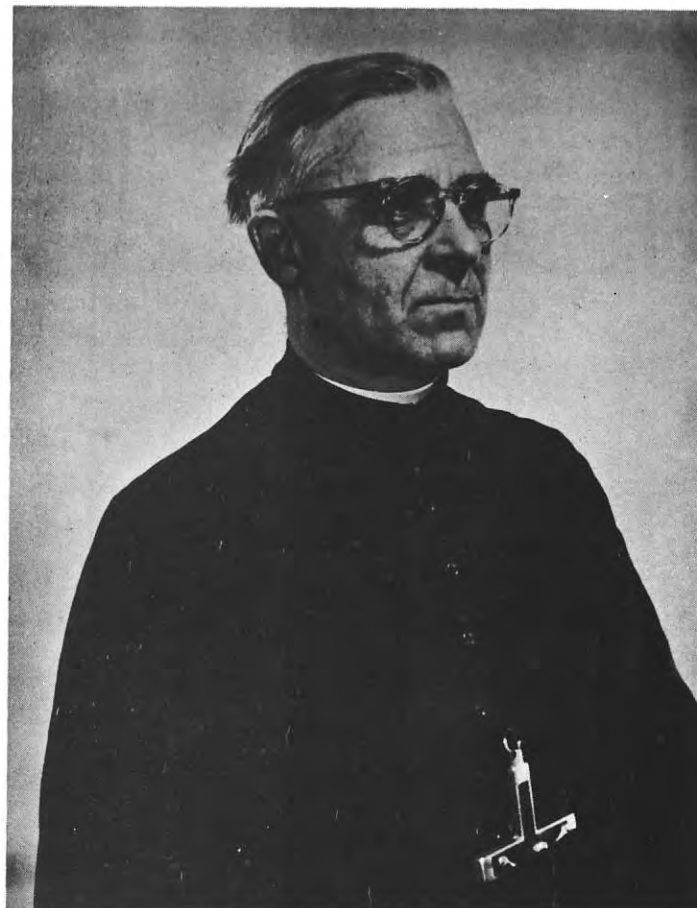
Father J. Turcotte, 1941-48



Father V. Philippe, 1948-51



Father L. Delalande, 1951-53



Father S. Lesage, 1953 ...

C O N C L U S I O N .

In undertaking to write this brief "Historical Sketch" on the Sacred Heart Mission and its allied institutions - the Saint Margaret's School and Hospital, - we had hoped in the greatness of Fort Simpson which is overshadowed by the factors of development at work in and around the Island. Out of sympathy for all the citizens of Fort Simpson, and as a token of admiration for the builders of this Mission, we have written a modest account of the deeds accomplished on the Island for the past Century. If we have succeeded, even partially, in our study, we are satisfied and gratified in offering to the present and future generations of Simpsonians this bit of history that may teach them mutual affection and gratitude.

References

- (1) See Part 2, page 30
- (2) St. Margaret's School Register - 1918-1927.
- (3) Chronique de l'Hopital Ste. Marguerite, 1920 * The sum was remitted to Sr. MCGUIRK by Mr. W.F. HARRIS.
- (4) The SHERWOOD children were confirmed Baptism at Fort Norman in 1937 and confirmation by Bishop FALLAIZE.
- (5) St. Margaret's School Register, 1926-1940.
- (6) Letter of O.S. FINNIE to Mt. Rev. G.BREYNAT (3-8-26)
- (7) Letter of R.A. GIBSON (4-3-1941)
- (8) Letter of O.S. FINNIE (4-3-1941)
- (9) Letter of J.A. McDOUGALL (12-2-1934)
- (10) R.T. FERRIER (11-5-1931)
- (11) Letter of R.A. ROEY (3-11-1943) (R.C. Indian Day School)
- (12) The reasons for a denominational school were not questioned then. The calling of names points out only to the means used for bringing up the matter.
- (13) School reports were made to the Indian Affairs Branch in 1926, which supplied the daily register for treaty pupils.
- (14) Alice CHOLO, Cecile SQUIRREL, Archie HARDISTY and Laura VILLENEUVE made grade 8.
- (15) Codex Historicus of the Sacred Heart Mission and Annales des Soeurs Grises: Hopital Ste. Marguerite.
- (16) Merv. HARDIE in letter to Father LESAGE (8-2-1954) He stated that the children were unfit to make a living.
- (17) The Anglican School had been closed since the departure of Rev. CLARK.
- (18) See Part 3, Chap. 1, page 62.
- (19) Father TURCOTTE, o.m.i. Type-written report, August 1944.
- (20) Dr. Andrew MOORE, Report of Survey in Mackenzie District, Ottawa 1944, p.51
- (21) Dr. Andrew MOORE, in Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence (15-4-1947) No. 10, p. 484.
- (22) St Margaret's School Register, 1937-1949
- (23) Dr. A. MOORE, id., No. 10, p.484.
J.W. MCKINNON in id., No.22, p.1142
R.A. ROEY, No.38, p.1945.
- (24) Dr. A. MOORE, id., No.10, p.484.
- (25) J.W. MCKINNON, id., No.22, p.1149.
- (26) R.A. ROEY, id., No.38, p.1948s.
Mr. R.A.ROEY had been instrumental in the establishment of a neutral school of this type at Hay River in 1947. - See proposal in letter to R.C.M. authority (14-2-47) - The system was condemned afterwards by Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER: Letters to Comm. KEENLYSIDE (30-10-47 and 4-12-47)
- (27) J.W.MCKINNON to Sister C. CARON (29-10-1947, 1-11-1947, 26-11-1947)
- (28) J.W.MCKINNON to Sister C. CARON (21-2-1948, 26-6-1948, 15-7-1948)
- (29) R.A. GIBSON to teacher (20-8-1948, 16-9-1948)
- (30) Letter of P.PHELAN (23-9-1949) - B. NEARY (25-11-1949)
- (31) Letter of J.W. MCKINNON (28-12-1949)
- (32) Father LIZE to Father LESAGE: Report(28-5-51)
- (33) The Diary of June reports names of Catholics who were drawn into the views of the promoters of the 'one school' plan.
- (34) "Confluent Whispers" 1950 October, p.6.
- (35) "Confluent Whispers" 1951 February, p.3.
- (36) See Part 3, Chap. 1, Page 72.

- (37) "Confluent Whispers" No.7, p.10
- (38) Codex Historicus, April 10th, p.70. - This a report made by Father FEUVRIER who was present at the Meeting.
- (39) "Confluent Whispers" May 1951 No.8, p.1
- (40) Sister C. PEDNAULT in letter to Superintendent of Education (16-3-1951)
- (41) Codex Historicus, Nov. 13th, p.78
- (42) Letter of Father LIZE to Father LESAGE (28-5-1951) * Mr. T. BLEILER was the proposer of a state-school.
Codex Historicus (12-3-1951) - Mr. J. CRAIG was the proposer of a second classroom for primary grades
Father V. PHILIPPE (10-1-1951) "I have the idea of a Catholic Boarding School" and repeated it later on (4-6-1951)
Father LIZE (28-5-1951) brought up the same project.
Father A. FEUVRIER brushed up the suggestion (28-6-1951) - He was the first, to our knowledge, to suggest a Hostel system for the Catholic school population of the whole district, including that of Norman and Franklin.
- (43) Codex Historicus, February 1952, p.80
- (44) Father PHILIPPE to Father LESAGE (9-8-1951)
- (45) "Confluent Whispers" Feb. 1952, No.11, p.5
- (46) Codex Historicus Feb. 24th, 1952 p.81
- (47) Mr. LORD to Sister C. PEDNAULT in Codex Historicus, Sept, 30th 1952 p.87.
- (48) Father DENIS to Father LESAGE (1-4-1954)
- (49) Mgr. J.M. TROCELLIER au Père DENIS, Fort Providence, Copie (27-7-1954)
Père POSSET, Fort Providence au Père LESAGE (5-8-1954)
- (50) Mgr. J.M. TROCELLIER au Père LESAGE (25-8-1954)
- (51) Petition by Catholics to Hon. J. PICKERSGILL, Minister responsible for Indian Affairs. - Letter to same of Father LESAGE (15-8-1954)
Père LECOAT, Fort Liard au Père LESAGE (25-6-1954)
Père FEUVRIER, Fort Wrigley au Père LESAGE (13-9-1954)
Père DENIS, Fort Providence au Père LESAGE (21-9-1954 et 14-12-1954)
- (52) Hon. Jean LESAGE, Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources in address (Copy)
- (53) Notice of meeting distributed to public and verbal report of the resolution on the following day, Nov. 12th, 1954
A second choice was "Church operated Hostels working in conjunction with a non-sectarian Government Day School" - The vote was 26 to one.
- (54) Mgr. J.M. TROCELLIER au Père LESAGE (29-8-1954 et 31-1-1955)
Père DENIS au Père LESAGE (21-12-1954)
R.P. G. LAVIOLETTE, Sec. de la Comm. Oblate, Ottawa au Père LESAGE (16-2-55)
Père MOKWA, Fort Smith au Père LESAGE (18-4-1955)
G. ROBERTSON, Comm. of the N.W.T. and Dep. Min. of N.A.&N.R. to Father LESAGE (7-4-1955 and 9-5-1955)
- (55) This Mission made a suggestion in the fall 1953 for the erection on this Island of a "Children's Home" to replace the one started in 1952 at Fort Smith by the Catholic Mission and closed down in the summer 1953. In April 1954, a rumor spread in Simpson like a flash, announcing a project of a boarding school in the settlement. The news however had been confused with a project of a trade school at Fort Simpson supported by the member of Parliament, Mr. Merr. HARDIE. Both suggestion of a "Children Home" and "Trade School" gave way later on to the plans of two Hostels and an enlarged Federal Day School at Fort Simpson. The plans submitted to the approval of the Rev. MARSH Anglican Bishop, and of the Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER, Catholic Bishop, were

approved by order in Council of the Federal Cabinet sometime in March. On April 1st, the Department of Indian Affairs and National Resources took over all responsibilities for the education in the Northwest Territories, having given guarantees that the educational rights of Indian Catholics under the Indian act would be protected.

R.G. ROBERTSON in letter to Father LESAGE (9-5-1955)

Communications of confidential and semi-confidential characters are not noted here, although their content may have nothing confidential and has been otherwise made known public. Verbal informations that are not noted in those references may only confirm public and official communications made at that time and later on.

(56) Letter of W.G. DEVITT to Father LESAGE (10-11-1954) It was no secret at the time that the promoters of the 'one school' were pressing for the enlargement of the neutral school.

(57) R.G. ROBERTSON to Father LESAGE (15-12-1954)

(58) R.G. ROBERTSON to Father LESAGE (7-4-1955)

(59) Parent-Teacher Ass. (Father LESAGE, secr.) to R.G. ROBERTSON (30-5-55, 5-12-55)

R.G. ROBERTSON to Parent-Teacher Ass. (28-12-1955) By that time the Parent-Teacher Ass. had replaced the Advisory School Board. One claim by Mr. T. BLEILER was that the new classroom would be for use by his pupils.

(60) R.G. ROBERTSON to Father LESAGE (9-5-1955)

(61) Minutes of the Meeting (27-6-1955) Chairman: F. SIBBESTON, Vice-Ch.: Mrs. R. CHENIER. We note that the first executive of the Advisory School Board was elected on August 16, 1953 * Chairman: Father LESAGE; Vice-Ch.: Mr. R. CHENIER; Secr.: Cpl S. BYER; Counsellors: F. SIBBESTON, E. LAFFERTY, and Mr. W. FELLOWES, Teacher.

(62) Address in "Cath. Voice", No.37, Jan. 1956 - A telegram of appreciation was sent by the joint committee to the Commissioner R.G. ROBERTSON.

(63) "Cath. Voice" No 41, Jan. 1956, p.3

(64) id. p.4

(65) Minutes of Meeting (Sept 25, 1956) New Officers were: Chairman: R. GAUDRY Vice-Ch.: B. GAZON.

(66) Verbal information passed to the writer on June 12, 1957. - While in Ottawa, I enquired at the Department about the affair. Mr. J.V. JACOBSON denied that instructions had been given to that effect. Yet, there was no denial that verbal instructions were given to the teacher Mr. ROBERTSON, in that direction.

(67) The Commissioner R.G. ROBERTSON declared that he knew of no pressure of that kind. Yet, he was referring only to his personal informations.

(68) "Edmonton Journal" (21-1-1956)

(69) In letters from X. and Z. to Father LESAGE - Confidential and semi-confidential informations, that may not be quoted in this study, could be made known to any curious inquirer who gives guaranty of honesty.

(70) "News of the North" Yellowknife (23-7-1954) p. 7

(71) Father LECOAT, Fort Wrigley, to Father LESAGE (1-11-1954)

(72) Father LUSSON, Fort Liard, to Father LESAGE (1-3-1959)

(73) News Of The North (25-7-1952) p.8

(74) News Of The North id. p.3

(75) R.G. ROBERTSON to Mt. Rev, J.M. TROCELLIER (27-1-1956) - Lot 17 belonged to the R.C.M., while Lot 16 was owned by the Anglican Mission. Lot 6 owned by the latter had been originally selected by Mrs. CUNNINGHAM and HUNT. Rev. MARSH, Anglican Bishop declined to sell it. Then Lots 16 and 17 were definitely chosen.

- (76) "Cath. Voice" Jan. 1957, p.4
- (77) L.A.C.O. HUNT, District Admin., Fort Smith, to Father LESAGE (2-5-1956)
- (78) R.G. ROBERTSON to Parent-Teacher Ass. (22-11-1956); - (21-12-1956) A mistake was made by Mr. HUNT who had indicated agreement to the custody of the equipment by the P.T.A. - One benefit of the proposal was to clarify one point of the administration of the new system.
- (79) R.G. ROBERTSON to Father LESAGE (20-3-1957)
- (80) Mr. SIVERTZ, dir. of Northern Adm., to P.T.A. (7-13-1956)
Mr. R.G. ROBERTSON to P.T.A. (10-8-1956)
- (81) "Cath. Voice" Nov. 1955, p.7
- (82) "Cath. Voice" Sept. 1957, p.8
- (83) R.G. ROBERTSON to Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER (30-10-1957) - A copy of the letter was sent to me by the writer who showed then an unprejudiced fairness. That was the second complain laid against the Superior of the Mission. A first was made a year earlier by Cpl. S. BYER who claimed that the Superior was too much insistent in treating school matters and not enough comprehensive of the divers situations
- (84) Father LESAGE to R.G. ROBERTSON (8-11-1957) (14-11-1957)
- (85) In report of the Superior to Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER. - In addition to those mentioned there were present Mrss. W.G. DEVITT, Engineer McQUARRIE, Architect, and a D.P.W. Engineer. A Lady acted as Secretary. Father PICHE, now Bishop PICHE, was present for a while.
- (86) Hon. W. SCOTT quoted by G.M. WEIR in Separate School Question in Canada, University of Columbia, 1932, published by the Ryerson Press, Toronto, pp. 76, 242, 265, 266.
Also W.H. MOORE in the CLASH, Rouge Ont. 1918, published by Dent & Sons Ltd, Toronto, p.291. - Both prominent Protestant authors could be read with much profit for the undersanding of Catholic education in Canada.
- (87) T.R. FERGUSON in Confederation Debates, 1865, quoted by "Hitorical Sketch of Ontario Separate School", Ottawa 1950, p.85
- (88) id. p. 90
- (89) "News Of The North" Yellowknife (1-8-1957) p.4
- (90) Father LESAGE to Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER (25-8-1955)
- (91) Memo: Father LESAGE to Mr. J. CAIRN (28-2-1958) - Superintendent R. WESTWATER commented later on that my conversation with Mr. J. CAIRNS was regarded as a personal and informal expression of opinion. Cfr. letter of R. WESTWATER to Father LESAGE (10-3-1958)
- (92) B.J. SIVERTZ to Mt. Rev. J.M. TROGELIER (21-4-1958) The latter declined to accept the proposal.
F.J. CUNNINGHAM to Father LESAGE (10-6-1958) Bishop TROCELLIER declined to comment on the proposal.
- (93) Telegram of J. PARKER to Mr. J. CREE stating that assurance has been given by the Minister (Yellowknife, 13-3-1958, copy)
R.G. ROBERTSON to Father LESAGE (26-4-1958)
R.G. ROBERTSON TO W.J. GOODALL (17-4-1958) Copy.
- (94) The new Superintendent of Schools, Mr. W.G. BOOTH, indicated that Officials of his Department, misinterpreting the list of local school age children published in the Catholic Voice, had registered a number of them for Fort Providence.
Information given in his interview with the writer on Oct. 7th.

(95) Report of the interview by Father LESAGE to Father L. MOKWA (7-10-1958)
W.G. BOOTH to Father LESAGE (11-10-1958)

(96) Mr. A COOKE, a University Graduate was granted a temporary teacher's certificate prior to his coming to Fort Simpson. It was alleged that Miss KING* STON with experience in teaching would do better with the pupils of junior grades, while Mr. COOKE would fill better the function in the senior grades.

Thus, there is no foundation in the malicious assertions which rendered the Superior of the Mission responsible for the redistribution of the teachers. At their meeting in June of that year, the executive members of the Parent-Teacher Association had recommended the employment of a second Catholic teacher for the increasing number of Catholic children. And the Superior of the Mission had offered the use of the former St. Margaret's School for the extra-classroom (Father LESAGE in letter to Mr. R.G. ROBERTSON, 15-6-1958)

In prevision of the difficulties of teaching religious instruction in the neutral classroom attended by Catholics and Protestants, I had been given authority by the Chief of Education, Mr. J.V. JACOBSON, to make use of that classroom during the last half hour of the school day. (In letter from Father PICHE, now Bishop PICHE, to Father LESAGE, 20-8-1958) Those children whose parents wanted them not to attend, were permitted to withdraw for the period of religious instruction. In fact, I started teaching religious instruction in September in that classroom conducted by Miss MCGUINNES, who dismissed then those who chose to leave school for that last half hour. Father LECOAT took my place afterwards to teach the group in that classroom, until he was informed by Miss MCGUINNES that it had become unexpedient to do so. Then, on Monday 29th, when I proceeded to give the half hour lesson to the group, the teacher Miss MCGUINNES informed me of a decision taken to discontinue the use of that classroom for that purpose. Since I insisted that the Education Department had given me authority to give religious instruction to the Catholic children, she hurried to get the Principal, Mr. HEP* BURN for further explanation. The latter, who repeated the decision taken by himself, informed me that he would not allow the use of that classroom for my period of religious instruction to the Catholic children. Meanwhile, he would request a ruling by his superior authority. Having bowed to his decision, I proceeded immediately to seek, by telegram, instruction from my own superior authorities. A reply came the following day from Rev. Father PICHE, stating that Mr. J.V. JACOBSON was giving instruction to Mr. HEPBURN for solving the controversy. In the meantime, the Commissioner instructed the District Administrator, Mr. C.L. MERRILL to take up the matter with Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER at Fort Smith. (Letter of R.J. PHILLIPS to Father LESAGE, 17-10-1958) - By that time, Mr. W.G. Booth had come to Fort Simpson to confer on the whole situation at school. And pending a solution, he advised alternation of the daily period of religious instruction in that classroom by the Catholic Priest and the Anglican Instructor. In fact, in view of the prospective arrangement for a 4th classroom, I abstained from giving religious instruction, until its opening on October 24th. Moreover, as I was alone then at the Mission, no formal religious instruction was given by the Priest to the junior Catholic class until the arrival of Rev. Father ROBIN in December. - The mixing of Catholic children in classrooms with Protestants, that has always been a bone of contention, had given further evidence of the wisdom practised by the Government superior authority, in implementing a policy of dual education at Fort Simpson.

(97) Mr. J. CRAIG, H.B.Co. Manager and Mr. TYLER circulated a petition among Catholics and Protestants requesting the amalgamation of all children, according to their grades, regardless of religious affiliations. Signed on Jan. 15th, it was forwarded to Mr. W.J. GOODALL, who was then in Ottawa, for submission to the Minister of Northern Affairs.

(98) In G.M. WEIR, "Separate School Question in Canada", p.276. Justice FARRELL declared further: "I held that these words 'same religious faith' meant bona fide members of the Roman Catholic Church, i.e. members of the Church by the usual method of confirmation and performance of religious duties, or children of Roman Catholic parents, or if as a former Protestant, they had been properly received and adopted by the Roman Catholic Church as a member of their Church according to the rights which would require Baptism and attendance at Mass and Confession. None of these things FARLEY had done, nor was he prepared to do them, and I held that he was not a bona fide member of the Roman Catholic Church..." When this Limberg case was being heard last, Mr. FARLEY was present and spoke to Hector McDONALD about the matter. "Well," Hector said, "did you go to Confession and take Communion last Easter?" - FARLEY said "NO". - "Well," he said, "you are not Catholic." p.277. -

Although under the civil jurisprudence, a non-practising Catholic may be considered as a Protestant, under the Church law however, he is considered as a Catholic until and unless he has made a declaration to the contrary. The one who is unworthy of, or is refused the Sacraments is not excluded from membership of the Church, but only from its spiritual benefits. All Protestant as a whole may be considered as a class of persons, (see WEIR, p. 191) but not individual sects.

(99) G.M. WEIR id., p.160. - There should be no misunderstanding as to the meaning of our observations. Catholics represent and speak for Catholic Schools only as a corporate group, or class of persons as a whole, not for individuals taken separately. In practical cases however, our observations would need further explanations. For instance, a private school may be for individual children, and not for a class of Catholics, etc... In our case, it concerns only schools established by public funds and opened to all Catholic children.

(100) E. RYERSON, a Methodist Missionary and afterwards Ontario Minister of Education, in "Historical Sketch of Ontario Separate Schools," same as above, p.28.

(101) In G.M. WEIR, same book, p. 265, 266.

In Rev. G.F. LAHEY: "The private Schools" in "Canadian Education to-day", Toronto 1956., p. 137. Father LAHEY writes: "In 1950, there were somewhat over 1000 private schools in Canada. In that year, Canadians sent 107,613 children to private schools. Since private schools, outside the Province of Quebec, receive no support from public funds, these same Canadians in other Provinces desired them so much that in addition to their regular taxes, they were willing to pay \$ 7,350,000.00 in order to have them."

There are at present in the Mackenzie District two Catholic private schools. The one at Aklavik will be closed this fall, and the one at Providence in 1960. The Anglican private school will be closed also this fall 1959. - The Yellowknife St. Patrick's School is one owned and operated by the Catholic ratepayers of that city. The only private school then in 1960 will be the one under construction at Fort Smith by the Oblate Fathers for Catholic boys of the whole Mackenzie.

(102) R.G.ROBERTSON, July 9, 1956, School Ordinance: Part 2, sections 19,23. Regulations regarding Audio-Visual Equipment supplied on a share basis.

Copy by L.A.C.O. HUNT to Father LESAGE (2-5-1956)

(103) W.P.PERCIVAL, Director of Protestant Education and Minister of Education, Quebec, in "Should We All Think Alike", 1951, published by W.J. GAGE, Toronto, p.88.

** S U M M A R Y O F S C H O O L A R R A N G E M E N T S . **

1955 - "We have provided funds in the 1955-1956 estimates to construct a one-room addition to the present Federal Day School at Fort Simpson to accommodate the children of the St. Margaret's Roman Catholic School at that point." - R.G. ROBERTSON to Father LESAGE (7-4-1955)

"Roman Catholic children will attend in a separate wing of the new Federal Day School. The assistant principal will be in complete charge of his wing in so far as its organization and discipline are concerned."
R.G. ROBERTSON to Father LESAGE (9-5-1955)

1958 -"On the basis of the statistics now available, it is the intention that classrooms arrangements will be as follows:

- Grades 1 to 5 : 28 children (solidly Catholic) one classroom.
- Grades 1 to 5 : 30 children (solidly Protestant) one classroom.
- Grades 6 to 9 : x children (Mixed) one classroom.

These interim arrangements outlined for the organization and administration of the Fort Simpson School will be in effect until the new combined school is in operation, and will in noway prejudice the establishment of the dual system of education which has been previously agreed upon."

Mr. SIVERTZ to Mt. Rev. J.M. TROCELLIER (21-4-1958) Copy.

"As you perhaps know, Dr. WESTWATER has agreed on your suggestion concerning the distribution of children in the Fort Simpson School for the school year commencing September 2, 1958. This means that the grades will be arranged as follows: Grades 1 and 2: 30 children (Mixed) one classroom

- Grades 3 to 9 : 27 children (All Catholics) one classroom
- Grades 3 to 9 : 27 children (All Protestants) one classroom

These arrangements will be in effect until..."

F.J. CUNNINGHAM for R.G. ROBERTSON to Father LESAGE (10-6-1958)

Arrangement prepared by W.G. BOOTH with the assistance and advice of the teachers on October 6, 1958: Mr. T HEPBURN, Miss S KINGSTON and Miss K. McGUINNES:

- Grade 1 22 children (All mixed) one classroom
- Grades 2&3 31 children (All mixed) one classroom
- Grades 4 to 9: 33 children (All mixed) one classroom

"I have requested Ottawa to authorize the rental of the St. Margaret's Parish Hall for the extra classroom. Arrangement and distribution as follows:

- Grades 1 and 2 : 20 children (All Catholics) one classroom
- Grades 3 to 9 : 28 children (All Catholics) one classroom
- Grades 1 to 3 : 19 children (All Protestants) one classroom
- Grades 4 to 9 : 21 children (All Protestants) one classroom.

Mr. W.G. BOOTH to Father LESAGE (11-10-1958)

 ** St . M A R G A R E T ' S S C H O O L A T T E N D A N C E * 1918-1955 **

YEAR	PUPILS	G R A D E S									TEACHERS	ENROLLMENT	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		Sept.	March 31
1918-19	14	12	*	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	Sr Mc GUIRK	7	14
1919-20	13	11	*	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	"	12	7
1920-21	15	11	2	*	2	*	*	*	*	*	"	15	8
1921-22	13	8	1	2	2	*	*	*	*	*	Sr. FIRMIN	11	11
1922-23	11	8	1	2	*	*	*	*	*	*	"	12	10
1923-24	15	8	1	4	*	3	*	*	*	*	"	17	12
1924-25	111	4	5	*	2	*	*	*	*	*	"	11	6
1925-26	20	8	2	*	6	*	*	3	1	*	"	24	19
1926-27	25	10	6	1	4	*	*	*	4	*	Sr. GAMACHE	31	25
1927-28	19	4	7	5	1	2	*	*	*	*	"	21	19
1928-29	21	10	*	9	1	1	*	*	*	*	"	23	22
1929-30	16	8	2	*	5	*	1	*	*	*	"	16	16
1930-31	15	6	4	2	1	2	*	*	*	*	"	16	13
1931-32	13	5	2	3	2	*	1	*	*	*	"	15	12
1932-33	15	7	2	3	2	*	1	*	*	*	"	15	16
1933-34	16	9	2	2	3	*	*	*	*	*	"	14	16
1934-35	16	9	2	2	1	2	*	*	*	*	"	19	13
1935-36	9	5	2	1	1	*	*	*	*	*	"	8	8
1936-37	11	5	3	1	2	*	*	*	*	*	"	15	7
1937-38	12	6	2	2	1	1	*	*	*	*	"	11	10
1938-39	13	5	3	3	1	1	*	*	*	*	"	10	10
1939-40	12	3	1	3	3	1	1	*	*	*	"	12	5
1940-41	15	5	2	2	2	3	1	*	*	*	Sr. McJULLAN	12	13
1941-42	17	5	2	3	*	3	*	4	*	*	"	16	15
1942-43	11	2	2	5	*	2	*	*	*	*	"	13	9
1943-44	14	2	*	4	*	6	*	2	*	*	Sr, SARASIN	14	8
1944-45	16	6	*	*	3	2	4	*	1	*	"	14	8
1945-46	19	4	4	*	2	4	*	4	1	*	"	19	15
1946-47	16	4	*	4	2	*	3	*	3	*	"	16	17
1947-48	17	2	3	1	3	3	*	4	*	1	"	12	15
1948-49	17	3	1	1	4	4	1	3	*	*	"	18	14
1949-50	18	5	4	1	3	2	2	1	*	*	Sr. PEDNEULT	25	13
1950-51	17	2	4	3	1	*	4	1	2	*	"	26	14
1951-52	12	4	2	2	1	1	*	3	*	*	"	15	10
1952-53	19	5	1	*	6	*	*	*	4	*	"	17	22
1953-54	20	3	7	1	2	3	*	*	1	*	Mr. G.W.FELLOWES	20	15
1954-55	21	4	5	5	*	1	4	*	2	*	Mr. M. GALLANT	22	21
1955-56	27										Mr. M. GALLANT	26	

N.B.: Several children began school at the age of 5 years and are not numbered above. -- Sr GREGOIRE and Sr LAVOIE have substituted teaching during the teacher's illness.

C O R R E C T I O N S .

- Page 10: Bishop FARAUD aged 43 years, instead of 57.
Page 26: Brother KERAMTRET's accident in August 1912.
Page 26: HISLOP & HAGLE began trading fur on this Island, but were sold to the Northern Trading Co. in 1911.
Alexis LAFFERTY had also a store on lot 13, now occupied by the St. Margaret's Hospital. He sold his business to BRYAN-LAMSON & HUBBARD in 1919. The H.B.Co. bought LAMSON & HUBBARD in 1926 and sold lot 13 to the Bishop of Mackenzie in 1930.
Page 30: The trial has taken place at Edmonton and Calgary.
page 33: The Treaty Party was headed by CONROY, not CORNWALL.
Page 40: Father J. TURCOTTE had gone to Fort Providence, not to Fort Liard.
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"NIHIL OBSTAT"

Rev. Father MOKWA,
Vicar General

FORT SMITH, N.W.T.



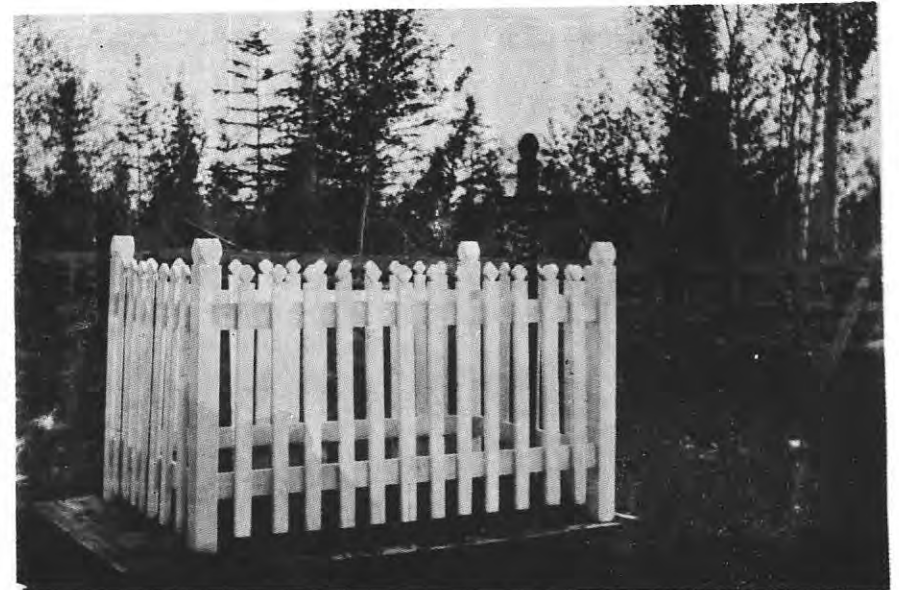
Sacred Heart Mission—1958



Sacred Heart Church—1953



RR. FF. Lesage, LeCoat, Duchaussois, Mary, Dessy, Posset — 1958



Grave of the R.F. F. X. Ducot—1916

His Excellency Bishop P. Piché, O.M.I.



Bishop Paul Piché, O.M.I.

Was born in the Diocese of Gravelbourg on September 14, 1909.

He made his Theological Studies at Lebret and was ordained priest on December 23, 1934. Professor at Lebret from 1936 to 1941 and thence Superior of the Oblate Juniorate at St. Boniface, for two years, he became Principal of the Qu'Appelle Indian School in 1943. Provincial of the Oblate Province of Manitoba from 1951 to 1956. Superintendent of the Oblate Commission for Indians and Eskimos Welfare until his appointed as Vicar Apostolic of Mackenzie, in March 1959.

His Excellency is the 3rd Vicar Apostolic of Mackenzie.

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