

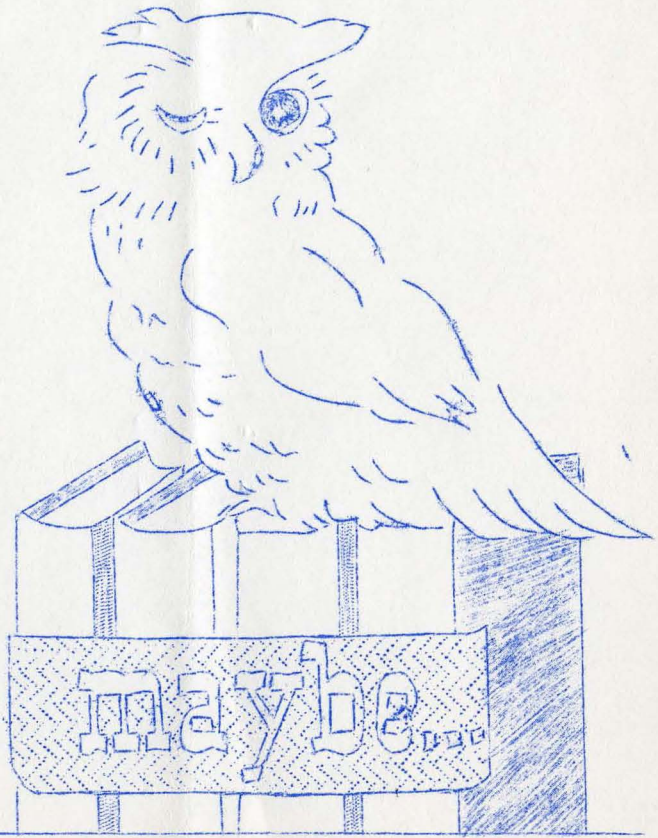
Vol. VIII

1953-54

no I

# THE GREAT PORTAGE

Sœurs Grises de Montréal  
Prov. S. Albert  
ARCHIVES



The Great Portage  
La Loche, Sask.

Volume 8, No 1

sept. 1953



# Father's Message

The school year at La Loche started on September 1st. The next day, Mr. Waugh, our administrator visited us. A serious problem was discussed with him.

The people of La Loche live mostly out of trapping, and as fur is getting quite scarce, a lot of them have to go North for a living. It is quite inconvenient that the men go alone and leave their family here. So it has been decided that we "will close the eyes" upon those who bring their family far North. We feel sorry that the children cannot attend school, but it seems that we cannot help it.

For these children and those of other villages as West La Loche, Garson Lake, Island Lake, a boarding school here would solve the problem but it is a project, which is not easy to realize. Nevertheless, we hope that some time in the future, it will become a reality.

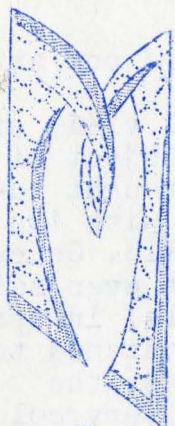
2 The child whose Dad has his trapline at about a day's distance is not justified in staying in the bush. In such a case, men alone can go trapping and it is possible for the children to attend school. Parents who have the opportunity of having their children educated should not miss it, even if they have to make sacrifices for that. Their children will be thankful to them later on when they will be able to use what they have learned in school.

You, children, remember that it is your advantage to attend school, and it is your duty to behave and do the work you are asked to. Be good children, loyal to God, your neighbors and yourselves, obedient to your teachers when in school, and to your parents when at home. Man is dependent on God and His representatives. A child following only his own will is doing wrong and will never be happy, even in this world. In school you are taught how to be good christians and citizens. So may this school year, for all of you, not be a failure, but make you attain this goal.

I ask God to bless you all.

La Loche, Sask.  
September, 1953

*J. Bourbonnais O.M.S.*



# MISSION

## NEW CHURCH AT LA LOCHE

The first visit of a missionary to La Loche was made in 1845 by Father Thibault. There was no village then. People spent winter in the bush where game and fur were easily found; in spring, traders would come and meet the H.B.C.'s barges in order to exchange their furs for merchandise. The people from the North come also for the same purpose. La Loche was the meeting place then. A portage of a dozen miles across which transportations had to be carried gave origin to the name of the place: Portage La Loche. This Northern route was the only one until 1885, but La Biche Lake prevailed afterwards.

Little by little, the Chipewyans

built log houses. Around 1870, it was heard of two small villages, one on the East side and the other on the West. In the Province of Quebec competitions often arise when a site for a church has to be chosen. The same thing happened at La Loche when it was decided that the first church be built. Now one of the Fathers thought he had found a solution. At about the same distance between the two villages, the land stretched in a long wide point. It was eventually the chosen spot for the new chapel built in 1887. At first every one seemed to be pleased, but this satisfaction didn't last. Father came twice from Ile-a-la-Crosse to preach a mission, but

in the following visits, he went to the two villages, said mass in a private house; and then the chapel was abandoned. This was the first chapel.

In 1893 after a great many discussions as to the site of the church it was decided that two churches would be built. The people from the East side started immediately squaring logs while the people from the West didn't do anything; so the building in the East was opened on September 1894. This was the second church.

In 1895 La Loche became residence. Father Penard who had been going on missions there for five years became a resident priest and remained until 1917, if we except a three year stage at Ile-a-la-Crosse.

In 1918 the growing population called for a larger church (70x30). Father Ducharme was then the Director of the mission. The following year he had 500 logs and other pieces ready. In 1920 the Chipewyans, under Father Ducharme's direction, raised up the framework; in 1922 Brother Nicolas came to try his skill as a carpenter, and on Trinity Sunday 1923 the new church

was inaugurated, the third one at La Loche.

In 1951, on a pastoral visit of Bishop Lajeunesse, the subject of construction was again brought about. The present church with its log base was not very solid. On certain windy days it wasn't even safe to remain within its walls, in spite of the strong supports fastened to it on either side. Besides, the heating was a problem in very cold days, and on feast days it had become too small. Consequently the construction of a new church 80x36 with 14x10 transepts, a 6x24 porch and a 14x24 sacristy was proposed. The mission sawmill would supply the necessary lumber. As for other materials we were to rely on our benefactors' generosity. His Excellency approved the project. In the winter of 1952 the brothers and a few helpers spent the greatest part of their time in cutting lumber. On May 7, 1953 when Brother Boisvert arrived, all the necessary boards and planks were on hand, and immediately the building of the church got under way.

The three brothers and seven to eight men with saw and hammer in

hand seemed to work under pressure so much so that in two months, a "ton" of nails had been driven in. It goes to say that it is solid, and that it will stand all kinds of weather. The basement is now equip with a furnace. Brick sidings cover the exterior walls while Tentest will be used for the interior. The blue asphalt-covered roof gives a good appearance to the building. (Opinions differ on that point however). But all agree that the high-pointing steeple is lovely. It is covered with aluminum and can be seen from far by moonlight as well as by daylight. In short we have a beautiful church. On July 26, feast of St. Ann, the first mass was celebrated in thanksgiving to Providence for having given us the means of erecting this temple. We also prayed for the intentions of all those who have helped in any way to the achievement of that great project. A good number of our people received Holy Communion on that occasion. Thus the fourth church is built at La Loche. The interior is not completed yet, but it is already

5  
suitable. We hope to see it finished by the end of winter. We are confident that Brother Boisvert with the help of the Brothers here will continue what he has so well begun.

(Translated from "La 4e eglise de La Loche" written by Reverend Father Bourbonnais).

#### THE SISTERS' RETREAT

The Sisters went to Beauval for their annual retreat. Every summer they go out, but they always return to us again, and I am very glad to see them.

Marguerite Janvier

#### THE OLD CHURCH IS NO MORE

Our old church is broken down. Many people had been helping to break down the roof and take off the windows and doors. I helped also.

On July 28 Brother took the "cat" to pull down the logs that had been left standing up. The work was quickly done, and many people were

6

around to look at the work, even the D.N.R. field officer and the H.B. Post Manager came to see it.

Now they fixed the place very nicely and we would never think that the old church has been there.

Jonas Lemaigre

#### THE LAST MASS IN THE OLD CHURCH

On Sunday, July 19, the holy Mass was said for the last time in the old church. I remembered how often I went to Communion in that church, and I felt sorry to think it was to be broken down soon.

This church was built many years ago, and it was quite cold in the winter time.

Rosaria Janvier

#### THE NEW CHURCH

The first time that the bells rang to call us to pray in the new church, many people came. Almost all the people went to Communion. Rev. Father Bourbonnais sang High Mass with Father Mathieu and Brother Dionne as deacon and sub-deacon.

Jonas Lemaigre, Jean Sylvestre, Napoleon Sylvestre and I served Mass. It was the feast of St. Ann on July 26.

The people were happy to come to the new church. All the benches were filled up and some boys and girls had to sit on the floor.

Alfred J. Janvier

#### ASSUMPTION DAY

The beautiful feast of the Assumption is always a great day for the missionaries and the people of La Loche. At the seven o'clock mass many received Holy Communion. At the Solemn Mass celebrated by Rev. Father Bourbonnais, Father Mathieu was deacon and Brother Dionne sub-deacon. At this mass also a great number received Holy Eucharist. Father Bourbonnais gave a wonderful sermon about Our Lady who loves and protects us always. At 2.00 p.m. a beautiful statue of the Assumption was solemnly escorted outdoors by all the people. During this procession we said beads and sang special hymns to our dear Mother.

The ceremony ended by the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. We all love Mary. May she always protect us.

FATHER MATHIEU'S TRIPS

On June 22 Father Mathieu walked all the way to Island Lake. He spent three days at that outpost administering the sacraments to the people there. On June the 27th he ministered to the spiritual needs of the White Fish Lake people and came back home on the 30th.

On September 8, Father Paid another visit to Island Lake. On September 11, he was back. By what I can see Father never seems to rest, for on September 21, he returned again to White Fish Lake to say mass and to visit the people up there, Altogether Father Mathieu walked 240 miles to visit his missions. He must have been very tired after such hardships. Nevertheless I know that Father was happy, for he is a great missionary. I think he loves his flock very much as nothing, neither rain nor snow will hold him back when time comes to tend to his flock. His sole ambi-

tion is to save souls.  
Napoleon Sylvestre

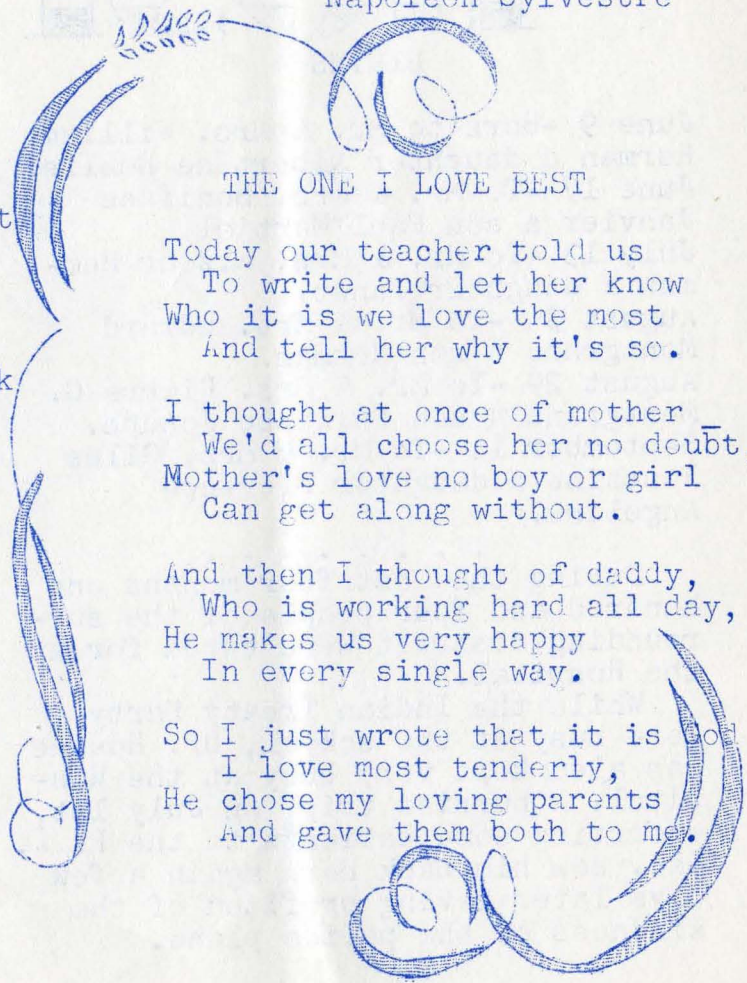
THE ONE I LOVE BEST

Today our teacher told us  
To write and let her know  
Who it is we love the most  
And tell her why it's so.

I thought at once of mother  
We'd all choose her no doubt,  
Mother's love no boy or girl  
Can get along without.

And then I thought of daddy,  
Who is working hard all day,  
He makes us very happy  
In every single way.

So I just wrote that it is God  
I love most tenderly,  
He chose my loving parents  
And gave them both to me.





# HOSPITAL

## BIRTHS

June 9 -Born to Mr. & Mrs. William Herman a daughter Albertine Emelie.  
 June 17 -To Mr. & Mrs. Boniface Janvier a son Paul Martial.  
 July 13 -To Mr. & Mrs. Elzear Herman a daughter Janet.  
 August 30 -To Mr. & Mrs. Edward Montgrand a son Norman.  
 August 29 -To Mr. & Mrs. Pierre C. Montgrand a son Philippe Joseph.  
 September 14 -To Mr. & Mrs. Giles Fontaine a daughter Florence Angeline.

. . . . .  
 During the last four months one hundred and four people of the surrounding district were cared for at the Hospital.

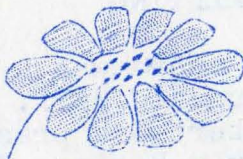
While the Indian Treaty Party were busy at the school, Dr. Hoehne was also kept very busy at the Hospital. A hurried trip, on July 1st, escorting some patients to the P. A. San. saw him back here again a few days later having profited of the kindness of the police plane.

On August 11th Doctor came in again in answer to a call by the Nurses. A very interesting operation was performed, and several patients visited for examination. He was in again on September 18th this time coming to the Nurses assistance and also to escort three small babies and an older boy to the San. He was accompanied by Misses Angeline and Isabelle Lepine who were pleased to help caring for the babies on the plane.

Doctor was leaving on holidays. We hope he enjoys his much-merited rest and will be glad to see Doctor again soon.

On July 9th Doctor Orr and Mr. Gilles made us a happy surprise when they came to visit the new Xray department and machine which was installed here by the Anti-Tubercular League in the early spring. We hope to see these kind gentlemen again some day.

. . . . .  
 Kindness repays itself.



# VILLAGE

## WEDDING

On June 3, Suzanne Lemaigre became the bride of my brother Ernest. Rev. Father Bourbonnais said the early nuptial mass during which we sang appropriate hymns. In the evening a dance was held in the Lajeunesse Hall. My sister Mary Louise from Waterways came out here for the great event.

Best wishes of lasting happiness to you, Ernest and Suzanne!  
Cecile Marie Herman

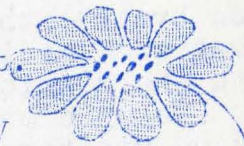
## HOME

Two patients, Henriette Janvier and Abraham Moise came back from the San. where they had been for many years. Their parents were very glad to see them.

They are changed a great deal for they were small when they left

and in five years, they grew quite a bit. They also speak good English now, and they look really well.

Welcome home, dear friends!  
Marie Sylvestre



## FLOWERS FOR OUR LADY

A lady from Vancouver and dear Mrs. P.E. Lavoie had sent gladioli bulbs to the sisters in early spring.

These flowers were very nice, and the sisters decorated the altar with them.

Mrs. S. Woodard gave all the flowers for the Blessed Virgin Mary's day, August 15. It made us happy to see how beautiful they were.

Cecile Sylvestre



## UNEXPECTED VISITORS

During the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament one fine Sunday, a plane stopped in front of the mission.

Sister A. Marien, R.N. accompanied by two other sisters had come to get some medicine which was required at the Hospital at Ile-a-la-Crosse.

We were most pleased to see our good visitors.

Then again on the 18th, another plane brought Dr. Hoehne accompanied by Angeline and Isabelle Lepine. They had come to take three of our small tots to the sanatorium.

Come again, friends.

Cecile Janvier

## TRIP TO PRINCE-ALBERT

Mrs. Alex Jolibois was flown into P.A. by a special plane to seek the services of a throat specialist. She had had the misfortune of swallowing some foptail barb which lodged in her throat.

- .- .- .- .- .-  
0 o 0 o 0

## TRAPPERS' MEETING

On September 24, there was a meeting at the Lajeunesse Hall. Mr. Reed from Prince-Albert was presiding. Mr. Tunstead from Regina, Mr. H. Toews from Meadow Lake and Mr. Gervais from Ile-a-la-Crosse were accompanying Mr. Reed.

Many trappers have already gone. We hope that all the trappers will return to spend the happy Christmas with us.

## TREATY PARTY

The last days of June saw the customary party come to pay the treaty money to the Indians living here.

It was the first time that the party was flown to Garson Lake to meet the people there.

The T.B. survey party was in at the same time and all the Indians were Xrayed.

Christine Toulejour



To Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Janvier we extend our heartfelt sympathy for the loss of their four month old baby Martin.

Also to Mr. and Mrs. Edouard Janvier for the loss of their beloved baby Mariette.

Couronne M. Toulejour

. . . . .

News has reached us of the death of Mr. Leon Herman at Ile-a-la-Croise Hospital. Mr. Herman, who had been ailing for a number of months, was flown there from Gipsy Lake in late August.

Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to Mrs. Leon Herman and family with the promise that our prayers will be offered for the eternal repose of him, who has gone ahead of us to heaven, there awaiting the days of eternal reunion.

R.I.P.

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

On September 21, Mr. Cobb manager central posts division, and Mr. Phillips, personel-manager, both from Winnipeg paid a visit here.

. . . . .

Mr. and Mrs. S. Woodard certainly have a good hand at gardening if one can judge by the fine vegetables and pretty flowers which their garden has produced.

Who could not guess but that the beautiful flowers found on the table in the kitchen were a gift from our friendly neighbours?

Once more may we express our heartfelt thanks for these and also for the decoration mentioned elsewhere.

But may we not add a word about the most perfect flowers that grow at the "dear little home at the post"?

The local breezes have brought us echoes of two year old Marilyn's sweet voice. Russell, we hear, will be strong enough to overthrow big sister.

Moccasin Telegram

D.N.R.

A chartered plane picked up Mrs. Poisson and her father who was visiting here. They both were flown to Swift Current where Mrs. Poisson is holidaying. Later Mr. Poisson joined the party.

# SCHOOL

## HOLIDAYS

On June 23, holidays began. At 11.15 a.m. our teacher received a phone call from Ile-a-la-Crosse that a special plane would be here at 1.30 p.m. My! we were so excited to hear: "School's out". At 2 p.m. two of our teachers were waving us goodbye. They told us to enjoy our summer holidays and not to forget to say our rosary every day. "If you do so," they added, "Our Blessed Mother will some day welcome you to a holiday of eternal happiness".

Celina Janvier

Our sincere congratulations to the pupils and staff of the Beauval Residential School for the excellent workmanship produced in their Yearbook 1952-53. We had long look forward to such a paper from your school. Now that our

hopes are fulfilled we will expect another masterpiece for 1953-54. Three cheers!!!

## MY EIGHTH BIRTHDAY

Once again we start to print the Great Portage. To all the children who read it, we wish a very happy school year.

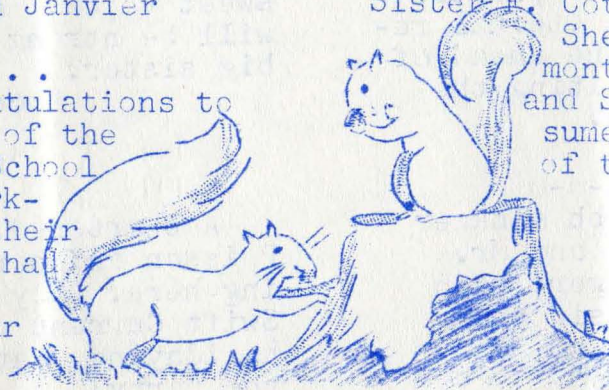
Al. Frank Janvier

## WELCOME HOME

It was with joy that we welcomed Sister E. Cote back in our midst. She had spent the summer months studying in Edmonton and St-Albert. She now resumes her work as teacher of the dear little ones.

## SCHOOL OPENS

On September 1st, at a special mass: Mass of the Holy Ghost, sixty-



three of us attended. Then we were all ready to start again when the Flag went up at 9.00.

On the second day Mr. Waugh was in to see us. He went through the three classrooms, and we were all happy to see him.

The pupils from Black Point were not in school yet. They delayed for two days to come back on account of the strong wind that was blowing on. We could see high waves on the lake, and the people were unable to cross.

Archie V. Park

WE ENJOY OURSELVES

On September 19, it rained, and we could not go out for our excursion, but we went to the hall for a good dinner, and how we enjoyed it. We say thank you to Father Bourbonnais for this his kindness.

THANKS

It took Brother Boisvert, Brother Dionne and Brother Vachon with their helpers three short months to erect our new church. It is high and much larger than the old one. Though it is not finished inside we were glad

to go in it for the feast of St. Ann. We prayed for the good Brothers who have done so much for us.

We like to have Brother Boisvert here because he is kind to the children -he made whistles for us-.

Gilles Jolibois

THE TREK NORTH

Edouard and Jonas Park, Alfred Cheecham, Boniface Janvier, Philip Lemaigre, Pierre Lemaigre, Jules Janvier, Edward Janvier, Jos. Montgrand and their families have migrated to their winter hunting grounds. Our friends have left us in order to provide for their families. We wish them all a very fruitful season of hunting and trapping, and we pray that God will bless them all.



44

