

Laboucane Settlement, later known as Duhamel Settlement

François Gabriel Dumont was the founder of what was to become the Laboucane Settlement, later known as Duhamel Settlement. In the early 1870s Francois moved from Lac St. Anne to the Battle River. At the time his brother-in-law Abraham Salois and Salois' two sons, Laurent and Gabriel, accompanied him. The first year after they moved the government appointed Francois to be the agent paying out Treaty money to the Indians. He did this in the area known as the Laboucane Settlement, later known as the Old Duhamel Settlement. In 1878 six brothers of the Laboucane family left White Horse Plain in Manitoba and headed west for the Battle River (Alberta). They were accompanied by members of the St. Germain and Poitras families. Three Laboucane brothers, Jean Baptiste, Gabriel and Elzear settled on land north of the river crossing and the other three, Jerome, Pierre and Guillaume settled on the south side.

This Metis community was located at the point where the Saddle Lake – Battleford Trail crosses the river. It is on the stretch of the Battle River at “Notikiwin Seppe” (crossing place) between the modern day cities of Wetaskiwin and Camrose. Francois was born at Old Fort Edmonton in 1825, the son of Gabriel Dumont Sr. and Suzanne Lucier. He married Nancy Gladu of Slave Lake at Lac Ste. Anne in 1849. François Gabriel Dumont, Abraham Salois (the brother-in-law of Francois), George Ward, and James Richards were the great buffalo hunters of Alberta. Francois was a leader of the Metis operating out of the Edmonton area and Boss Hill and Tail Creek. Francois was the person who traveled to Winnipeg to bring the first priest back to establish a mission at St. Albert. He also brought the first plow, which he used on his farm at Lac St. Anne.



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