

St. Vital, Manitoba:

St. Vital was originally part of the RM of St. Boniface formed in 1880. It was renamed the Rural Municipality of St. Vital in 1903. The St. Vital RM was originally on both sides of the Red River until the western section became Fort Garry following the creation of the rural municipality of Fort Garry in 1912. The population in 1901 was 585, this rose to 3,771 in 1921 and 10,402 in 1931. Louis Riel's brother, Joseph Riel was one of the early mayors of St. Vital.

This area was the site of early Métis river lots of the boatmen and buffalo hunters. After 1824, the Métis population spread south of St. Boniface along both sides of the Red River. About eight kilometers south of the Cathedral the parish of St. Vital developed along the broad elbow of the Red River. The Métis asked Archbishop Taché named the school and parish St. Alexander after his own patron Saint but he preferred to name it St. Vital in honour of auxiliary Bishop, Rev. Vital Julian Grandin. The Grey Nuns opened a school in St. Vital in 1860.

The most famous residents of St. Vital were the Riel, Nault, and Bruce families. Up until 1856, these residents attended church at St. Boniface but subsequently went to St. Norbert. A small school and chapel were established on September 12, 1860, but there was no resident priest until 1912. Sister L'Espérance Youville was the first teacher at the school.



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