

François Gabriel Dumont. (1825)

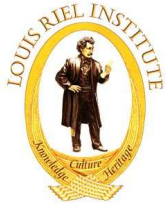
François was born at Old Fort Edmonton in 1825, the son of Gabriel Dumont Sr. and Suzanne Lucier. He married Nancy Gladu the daughter of Charles Gladu and Therese Gray of Slave Lake at Lac Ste. Anne on November 26, 1849. He was a first cousin of Gabriel Dumont of 1885 Resistance fame (their father's were brothers). Francois led an annual assembly of buffalo hunters during the southern hunting treks.

Buffalo Lake and the Battle River Valley came to prominence as a Metis gathering places after the great small-pox (*la picotte*) epidemic of 1870. Francois' brothers Jean Baptiste and Jacques both died in this plague. The Metis fled from locations such as St. Albert, Lac St. Anne and Edmonton to escape the disease. There were four nearby Metis wintering sites: Salois' Crossing near Duhamel, Tail Creek near Boss Hill, Todd's Crossing near Ponoka, and Dried Meat Hill. The Buffalo Lake site is located between Lynn and Buffalo Lakes southeast of Edmonton.

François Gabriel Dumont was the founder of what was to become the Laboucane Settlement, later known as Duhamel Settlement. 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.

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.

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