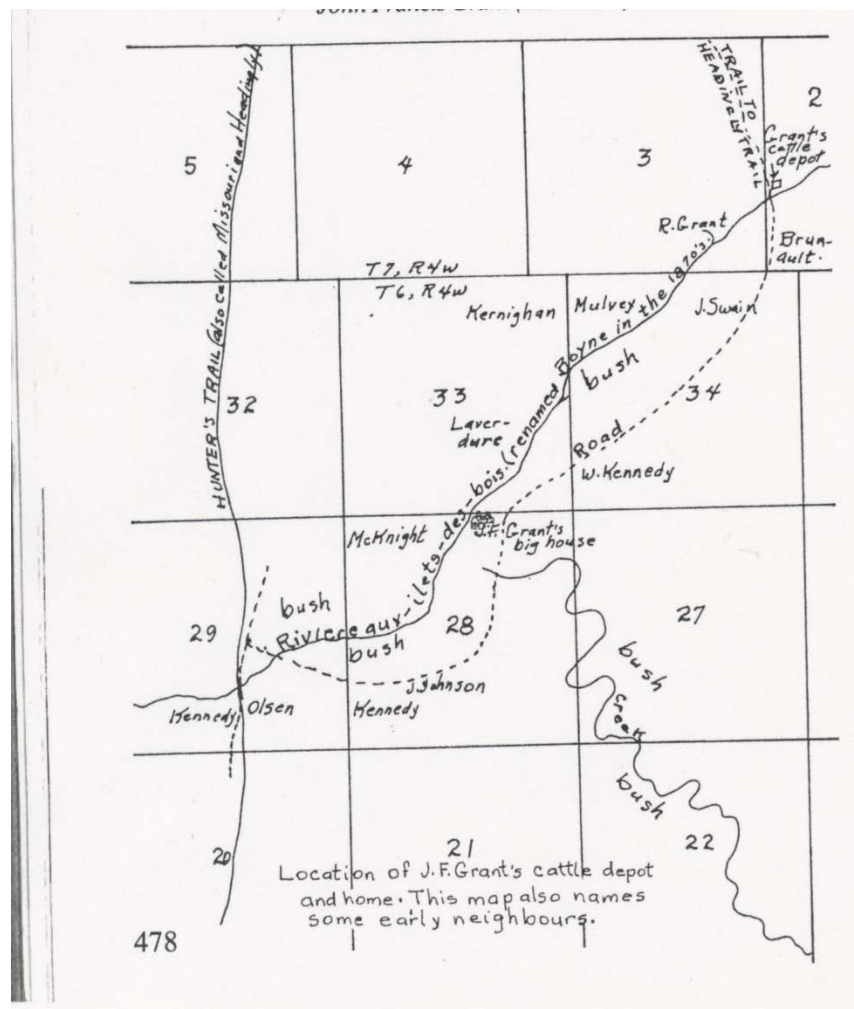


Îlets de Bois (now Carman Manitoba)

Shortly after the Métis established St. François Xavier a number of Métis started to trek southwest to look for more suitable land for their homes. This district was well known, even before the Métis settled here, as this was the first stopping place of the Buffalo hunters, where they repaired their Red River Carts, before resuming their journey on the Missouri Trail over the Pembina Hills. They crossed the La Sale River near the present day Starbuck and followed the western edge of the Big Marsh. They emerged at its southwestern end and came upon a piece of land that seemed to have suited them. This land was situated north of the Tiger Hills and the north side of the Rivière aux Îlets-de-Bois, named because of the many sharp curves and bends of the river, on which grew stands of maple, oak, elm, ash, and basswood



Map showing Johnny Grant's home and Cattle Depot
From the R.M. of Dufferin (community history) 1982: 478.

Îlets de Bois was located on the western extension of the Missouri Trail out of Red River: the Missouri trail left the main Fort Ellice Trail – roughly where Highway 1 is now, just east of Headingly, where it forded the Assiniboine River, and headed in a south-westerly direction

crossing the Rivière Îlets de Bois (Boyne River) then headed southwest to Nelsonville through what is now Starbuck. From there it went South and West keeping to the east edge of the Boyne marsh and headed towards the present site of Carman. It crossed a river there about half a mile east of the present center of Carman, and then continued south to Tobacco Creek and paralleled Highway 3. The Trail was kept in public use until after 1900, and was 66 feet in width. The trail then proceeds west to the Marsh gives way to oak and elm groves, to what was then known as Rivière aux Îlets de Bois. This was a favourite location for the Red River cart builders from St. François Xavier. Prior to settlement numerous Métis used to come in the spring from St. François Xavier to the Îlets de Bois, to tap the big maples to make sugar. Later, the famous Johnny Grant and his wife Clothilde Bruneau would establish a home and cattle depot in the area.



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