

The Former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
St. Jean-Baptiste
1897-1898

*AN OVERVIEW OF
FRENCH CATHOLIC CONVENTS
IN MANITOBA
1846 - 1927*

*ELAINE KISLOW
ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN
HISTORIC RESOURCES BRANCH
MANITOBA CULTURE, HERITAGE
AND CITIZENSHIP*

DATE: APRIL, 1996

FILE NO.: 471.B.2

DOCUMENT NO.: 4392h

EARLY CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN MANITOBA, 1818-1870

During the French régime in Canada, the Catholic Church sent its priests, in company with fur traders, explorers, and military garrisons, to act as missionaries to the Aboriginal peoples. They also served the religious needs of the French population stationed in territories claimed by New France -- an area which stretched west to the Rocky Mountains and south to the Mississippi River. In this way, the Catholic Church reached the farthest corners of New France, maintaining contact with its French people and seeking to incorporate all the Aboriginal nations into its fold. Missions maintained this dual character, bringing religious services to Catholics, while at the same time preaching the Gospel to those who had never before encountered Christianity.¹

Most Catholic missionaries were of the Jesuit Order and a few reached areas in what is now Manitoba -- Fort Bourbon (York Factory), Fort la Reine (Portage la Prairie) and Fort Dauphin (Dauphin). These priests had some contact with the Aboriginal people of Manitoba and with Métis children of the French fur traders and Aboriginal women. This was the first Catholic missionary influence in Manitoba. However, after the cession of New France in 1763, Catholic priests did not venture beyond the St. Lawrence River and Upper Great Lakes for several decades.

After the War of 1812 the British Crown had taken a more tolerant position toward the Catholic Church as French-Catholic clergy proved their loyalty towards Canada during the War. With a ready supply of young priests, the Roman Catholic Church was allowed to expand its missionary work into British North America. By 1811-12 Lord Selkirk had already established a

small colony at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. However, the Catholic priest for which Lord Selkirk had arranged to serve the colony, never reached the Red River Settlement. It took another six years of political and religious maneuvering before the Governor of Quebec, Lord Sherbrooke, permitted the Catholic Church to expand into the Red River Settlement and the North West. He hoped to ensure peace in the North West with the acquisition by the Catholic Church of a substantial parcel of land on the east side of the Red River. In 1818 Joseph-Octave Plessis, Bishop of Quebec, began his first permanent Catholic mission by sending two of his priests -- Joseph-Norbert Provencher and Sévère Dumolin, and a seminarian, William Edge -- to begin the establishment of the Catholic Church within Lord Selkirk's colony at Red River. The two priests were to minister to Aboriginal, French-Canadian, and Métis people in a resumption of earlier missions of New France.²

EARLY CATHOLIC MISSIONS AT RED RIVER

Father Provencher, who became Bishop of St. Boniface in 1851, chose a site on the east bank of the Red River within the land grant made by Lord Selkirk to establish a mission. He began construction of the first log chapel in 1818. Father Provencher conducted his missionary work in what was to become St. Boniface, while Father Dumoulin worked among the Métis at Pembina. In 1823-24 the Pembina Mission and some of its people relocated north of the 49th parallel to White Horse Plains which became the Parish of St. François-Xavier.

By the 1840s St. Boniface became a separate diocese from Quebec, and

was solely responsible for recruiting its own Catholic priests to undertake missionary work in the North West. In 1844 Father Provencher approached France, specifically the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) for much needed help. The OMI responded and the first two Oblates — Père Hurbert and Frère Taché — arrived in St. Boniface in 1845 and worked under Bishop Provencher's guidance. But with so few priests and the need to educate girls, Bishop Provencher turned to the Grey Nuns of Montreal for assistance. The Grey Nuns accepted this challenge and proved invaluable to Bishop Provencher and his priests. The Order represented the unique contribution made by women to the nineteenth-century in the Roman Catholic mission field. The Grey Nuns were willing and able to undertake a variety of duties, including teaching, catechizing, visiting the sick and poor, and looking after orphans.³ When the former Grey Nuns Convent (now the St. Boniface Museum, 497 Tache Avenue) was constructed (1846-51), it was the first of many French-Catholic convents to be erected in Manitoba, predominately in the south eastern portion of the province.*

CONVENTS IN MANITOBA

The Grey Nuns were the first Order of nuns to arrive in Manitoba. They were, however, not the only Order to settle in keep in province, erect convents and provide children with religious and academic instruction. By general definition, a convent was a residence for nuns of a

*NOTE: The preceding overview on French-Catholic missions in Manitoba was taken from *To Evangelize the Nations: Roman Catholic Missions In Manitoba, 1818-1870* by Martha McCarthy, published by the Historic Resources Branch in 1990. This publication provides an excellent, in-depth study of the role of Roman Catholic missions and their impact on the religious and cultural development of Manitoba.

particular religious Order or spiritual community. Part of the convent, as was the case in many Manitoba communities, was utilized as a girls school and boarding facility⁴. A convent may have also been a co-ed educational institution for the community or district, usually from grade eight and upwards. Convents which incorporated schools often were called an "academy",⁵ such as St. Michael's Academy in Brandon. More often, however, the convent-school complex took on the parish name with the word "convent",⁶ as in the case of St. Norbert Convent. Rural convents often attained large numbers of boarders and day students which, in some cases, required structural additions to the building. The former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, in St. Jean-Baptiste, had an addition erected in 1910 adjacent to the original 1897 structure. The convent had to accommodate an overflow of students: 168 students (56 boarders and 112 day students) and 11 nuns.⁷

Religious groups which established convents and ministered to Manitoba's French-Catholic population were concentrated in an area extending to the east and west of the Red River and southward to the American border. Communities where nuns became an integral component of social and cultural, and religious life were numerous -- La Salle, Ste. Agathe, Aubigny, St. Pierre-Jolys, La Broquerie and St. Jean-Baptiste -- to name a few. Further westward, the communities of St. Claude, St. Alphonse, Bruxelles, Mariapolis, Dunrae and Brandon, and the more distant towns of St. Laurent by Lake Manitoba and St. George and Powerview east of Lake Winnipeg had active nuns. All these convents* were originally part of the Archdiocese of St.

*SEE APPENDIX I and II: *Religious Orders and Convents in the Archdiocese of St. Boniface and Archdiocese of Winnipeg, 1930*

Boniface. The Archdiocese of Winnipeg was created in 1915 which incorporated some parishes previously associated with St. Boniface. By 1930, the Archdiocese of St. Boniface had the highest concentration of convents -- 24 -- operated by at least six different religious Orders.⁸ The religious Orders which operated in Manitoba, and still reside in the Province include: Daughters of the Cross, Grey Nuns, Our Lady of the Missions, Sisters of St. Joseph, Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, Sisters of the Saviour and the Oblate Sisters.

While convents generally served girls, although some were co-educational, the education of boys was certainly not forgotten by Manitoba's religious organizations. Larger communities like St. Pierre, St. Jean Baptiste, St. Anne, St. Boniface and St. Norbert, had separate school buildings for boys and who were taught by Brothers, not Priests. These schools, were also known by several names such as "juniorat", "collège", and "école des garçons."⁹ Most were day schools, but the former Maison St. Joseph in Otterburne, directed under the auspices of the Missionaries of St. Joseph, included boys' boarding facilities and an orphanage, along with educational facilities.

The Former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
St. Jean-Baptiste

A. HISTORY

The Village of St. Jean-Baptiste is located in the Rural Municipality of Montcalm, 70 kilometres south of Winnipeg on Highway 75. The village is one of many French-Catholic communities in south eastern Manitoba located near the Red River. Like its neighbouring communities, St. Jean-Baptiste became a focal point for religious and educational instruction under the direction of the Archdiocese of St. Boniface.

It was in 1895 at the request of His Excellency Msgr. Adélarde Langevin, Archbishop of St. Boniface, that the General Headquarters of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary in Quebec, agreed to send teaching nuns to educate the young people of St. Jean-Baptiste. Four Sisters left Hochelaga, Quebec, on August 20, 1895 -- Sister Superior Marie-Godefroy, Sister Marie-Hermine, Sister Jean-Marie and Sister Marie-Ovide -- and arrived at St. Jean-Baptiste 17 days later, on August 27, 1895. A few days later, two more Sisters joined the mission -- Sister Marie-Clementine and Sister Thomas-de-Villeneuve. These six devoted nuns formed the nucleus of a religious and educational institution which served the young people of St. Jean-Baptiste and the surrounding district for 95 years.

When the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary arrived in St. Jean-Baptiste their home was a poor and barely furnished wooden house. The building had been erected for the Grey Nuns who had ministered to, and subsequently left the village. In 1897, with a growing student population,

a new convent was constructed to plans prepared by St. Boniface architect, Joseph Azarie Sénécal (1841-1917). An addition to this Second Empire style convent was designed by J.A. Sénécal and J.A. Hudon and erected in 1910.

The Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary began their religious and educational work immediately upon their arrival in St. Jean-Baptiste. For a time, the Sisters taught both girls and boys, then a lay teacher taught boys in the original residence from 1889 to 1900. Beginning in October 1900 to September 1904, boys attended classes in the new convent, and later attended the local boys college operated by The Brothers of the Cross of Jesus, a teaching Order from France. The boys returned to the convent during the World War I period while the Brothers were in France, but returned to the college from 1917-1940 which came under the direction the Marianistes Brothers. In 1940 with the departure of the Brothers, the boys returned to the convent. In 1953 the local school board built an addition to the convent to accommodate the growing student population. St. Jean-Baptiste was chosen in 1961 as the centre for a new collegiate in the Red River School Division, as part of the Province's move toward school consolidation.¹⁰

From this period until the convent was sold in 1992 to the Village of St. Jean-Baptiste, the Sisters remained active and eager participants in the spiritual, educational and social life of the school and the community. The former Convent remains both a familiar and significant structure in the village. The structure's current owners, Gunther Dorn and Patrice-Ryan Dorn, have acknowledged its architectural and historical integrity and plan a vibrant future for the former convent.

B. STYLE

The former Convent of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary was erected in the Second Empire style of architecture, which, by 1900, had become a trademark of the French Catholic religious community in Manitoba. Second Empire, as discussed in *Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba*, was introduced to Canada and the United States from France via England and takes its name from the French Second Empire, during the reign of Napoleon III (1852-1870). The style was commonly used for a variety of public buildings, such as Winnipeg's Lieutenant Governor's Residence (1883) and the 1884 Legislative Building (demolished 1920). Residential architecture adapted the style in a modest fashion as seen in La Boucherie, in St. Norbert (ca1895; enlarged and altered, ca1905). It was, however, the Roman Catholic Church, in particular, French-Catholic religious institutions, who adopted the Second Empire Style for its numerous convents and schools and utilized it well into the 20th century.

See Appen
III

The Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, a substantial four-storey brick building, featured many of the distinguishing characteristics of the Second Empire style. A central pavilion, which rises through to the top floor, is adorned with a datestone and cross. The concave mansard roof is punctuated with pedimented dormer windows. Decorative detailing on the façade includes brick belt courses between floors and quoins which decoratively emphasize the outside corners of the brick building. A 1910 north wing addition, designed by J.A. Sénécal and J. A. Hudon, did not compromise the overall character of the structure.

C. CONSTRUCTION

The former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary is a four-storey brick veneer structure atop a shallow stone foundation. This construction technique means that the structure is basically built of wood framing to which bricks are attached, which then gives the impression of a more substantial brick structure. This method was common until the advent of mass-produced stucco after 1910.

D. DESIGN

The St. Jean-Baptiste Convent was designed in Second Empire architecture by Joseph Azarie Sénécal, a well-known St. Boniface architect and contractor. It was built to serve as a nun's residence, educational institution with boarding facilities, and a place of worship. The building interior suggests a modest, utilitarian function and layout. The lower level provided space for a dining room, classroom and lockers. A large part of the main or first floor, was taken-up with a kitchen, dining room, chapel, and a shed roof addition which served as a summer kitchen. Classrooms, washrooms and dormitories comprised the second floor the third floor was used as boarding facilities and the 1910 addition was also relegated to dormitory space.

E. INTERIOR

Beginning in 1950, the former convent underwent a series of interior renovations and alterations. That year, and in 1966, massive flooding damaged the structure, particularly to the first floor which warranted extensive repairs. During this time, communal areas and dormitories were remodelled to better accommodate both the Sisters, day students and boarders, and several

senior citizen organizations. Some original doors with hardware and mouldings remain intact, as well as transom lights over doors. A set of 22 closets along one wall on the top floor remain untouched. The foyer on main floor, which includes the Mother Superior and administration offices, is covered in concentric patterned hardwood flooring, and a generous amount of original doors, mouldings and other decorative detailing.

F. INTEGRITY

- (i) The former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary Convent is on its original site.
- (ii) The exterior of the structure remains intact and the 1910 addition is sympathetic in design to the original 1897 structure. Renovations and alterations have been undertaken over the past years to modernize the former convent. Some original elements remain -- door mouldings, hardware, transom windows, patterned flooring -- as remnants of the building's original interior ornamentation.
- (iii) Generally, the building is in fair condition. Areas which require attention include replacement of the roof, some window panes and solving problem areas of the building caused by heavy condensation and water seepage.

G. STREETScape

The former convent is located just a short distance south of the attractive St. Jean-Baptiste Roman Catholic Church. The building, set back from the street on a large green space, is sheltered by mature trees and shrubs. The building and grounds remain a vital component of the village and adds to the ambiance of Caron Street, St. Jean-Baptiste's main thoroughfare.

H. ARCHITECT/CONTRACTOR

The architect of the former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary was Joseph Azarie Sénécal, a noted citizen of St. Boniface. Born in St. Marc, Quebec, November 14, 1841, the young Sénécal quickly adopted the family trade of carpentry. After being educated in the schools of Verchère County, Sénécal farmed in the area from 1855 to 1861. He moved to Beloeil, Quebec and became a building contractor. It was in Beloeil in 1864 that Sénécal built his first structure, the Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. This was the beginning of what would be a close relationship between Sénécal and that religious group in Manitoba. Sénécal pursued carpentry in Beloeil until 1874. He relocated to Montreal and established a sash and door factory which operated until 1877.

In 1877 Joseph Azarie moved to Manitoba with his wife and children. He farmed in the Baie St. Paul, St. François-Xavier District, and soon became quite prominent in community affairs. From 1877-91, Sénécal held several public positions, including school trustee, school board secretary, Justice of the Peace, and Reeve for the Municipality of St. François-Xavier. In 1880 Sénécal opened a store at St. François-Xavier which he operated until 1884. He again returned to farming but stopped in 1887 when he was chosen to build a number of structures for the Hudson's Bay Company in Alberta.

Sénécal's final relocation took place in 1891. At fifty years of age he realized his children were not interested in farming. He settled in St. Boniface in 1891 and resumed his contracting business which lasted until 1914 when he retired. Sénécal continued to hold various public offices during his life in St. Boniface. He was unanimously elected Mayor in 1901 and was President of the St. Jean-Baptiste Society of Manitoba. After a short illness, Sénécal died March 20, 1917 and was buried in St. Boniface Cemetery.

During the Manitoba phase of his building career, Sénécal became largely identified with Roman Catholic buildings throughout Western Canada. Sénécal also constructed many private residences in St. Boniface. In addition to his contracting work, Sénécal was also the architect of many of the structures he built, which gave a certain visual uniformity to Catholic buildings. He was the most important Manitoba figure in Catholic building design during his active years. While Sénécal was probably not formally trained as an architect, he was able to establish a reputation as a qualified builder and designer. Less strict requirements for entry into the profession were evident prior to the establishment of the Manitoba Association of Architects in 1907. However, this did not mean that the untrained designer could not produce good works.

The following is a list of known buildings associated with the work of J.A. Sénécal:

CHURCHES CONSTRUCTED

1. St. Boniface Cathedral, 1906-08; destroyed by fire in 1968
2. St. Anne des Chênes Roman Catholic Church, 1895
3. Holy Ghost Polish Catholic Church, Winnipeg, 1899; demolished 1986
4. St. François-Xavier Roman Catholic Church, 1905

CHURCHES PLANNED

1. St. Leon Roman Catholic Church, Manitoba
2. Rivière à-la-Pline, Ontario
3. Duck Lake, Saskatchewan
4. Wetaskawin, Alberta

5. Morinville, Alberta
6. St. Ignace des Saulleo, Alberta
7. Milton, North Dakota

HOSPITALS CONSTRUCTED

1. St. Boniface Hospital, Winnipeg (Grey Nuns; part of 1897 structure)
2. St. Roch Hospital, St. Boniface (Grey Nuns; 2 wings 1895-1942; demolished)
3. Misericordia Hospital, Winnipeg
4. General Hospital (Grey Nuns), Edmonton, Alberta
5. Misericordia Hospital, (Grey Nuns), Edmonton, Alberta
6. Holy Cross Hospital (Grey Nuns), Calgary, Alberta
7. Asile Richot (now X-Kalay Foundation), (Grey Nuns), St. Norbert
8. St. Boniface Hospital, Winnipeg (Grey Nuns; Centre Wing, 1914)

CONVENTS DESIGNED AND BUILT IN MANITOBA

1. St. Mary's Academy, Pioneer Avenue, Winnipeg (1892 wing; demolished 1956)
2. St. Mary's Academy, Wellington Crescent, Winnipeg (1902-03; constructed part of structure, but designed by Winnipeg architect Samuel Hooper)
3. St. Pierre-Jolys Convent, St. Pierre-Jolys, 1900
4. St. Jean-Baptiste Convent, St. Jean Baptiste, 1897
5. St. Michael's Academy, City of Brandon, 1909-10
6. St. François-Xavier Convent, St. François-Xavier (c1892, destroyed by fire in 1915)
7. Letellier Convent, Letellier (c1905, demolished in the mid 1970s)
8. St. Joseph's Academy, St. Boniface, 1911.

SCHOOLS BUILT IN MANITOBA

1. St. Boniface Normal School, H.S. Griffiths, Architect, 1903
2. Provencher School, St. Boniface, Samuel Hooper, Architect, 1906

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

1. St. Mary's Cathedral Presbytery, Winnipeg (1899, demolished)
2. West Canada Publishing Company, Winnipeg
3. St. Boniface Waterworks Building, 1904-05
4. Canadian Northern Station, St. Boniface, R.B. Pratt, Architect¹¹

I. PERSON/INSTITUTION

The Catholic Church was one of the major religious denominations in the Canadian North West and was often the first institution that took root in pioneer settlements. It quickly became the focus for not only spiritual growth, but academic, cultural and social life in an expanding community. In Manitoba, French-Catholic religious institutions were part of the province's historical foundation and development. Religious Orders and their convent buildings became the foremost teaching institution of the church. Within the walls of their convent, nuns taught the parish youth, generally girls, sound academics, the Catholic theology and a Christian lifestyle. The convent became a highly significant cultural institution as it served to preserve the French cultural traditions in Manitoba. The former St. Jean-Baptiste Convent is a good example of a French-Catholic convent which maintained a highly visible and respected status as an educational, religious, and cultural institution in and beyond its immediate community in south eastern Manitoba.

J. EVENT

None known to be associated with this site.

K. CONTEXT

The former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary was constructed in 1897-98 in the Second Empire style of architecture. By 1900 Second Empire had become the architectural trademark of the Francophone religious community in Manitoba. Earlier convents, however, did not possess this style, as was the case with the Grey Nuns Convent (1846-51) the oldest convent in Manitoba. Located at 494 Taché Avenue, the former convent is still owned by the Grey Nuns. It is leased to the City of Winnipeg and is now the St. Boniface Museum. The basic design of the former convent reflects Georgian styling, but incorporates features of "la maison traditionnelle" (steep roof, dormers, paired shutter casement windows) typical of French-Canadian residential architecture. It is built of Red River Frame log construction utilizing the grooved-post technique called "pièce-sur-pièce." The structure is a well proportioned, two-storey hipped roof building clad with vertical wood siding.¹²

This residential form of architecture was continued with the construction of the Grey Nuns first convent in St. Norbert (1858; demolished), and later, their first convent in St. François-Xavier (1892; destroyed by fire in 1915), both wood-frame structures.

Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, Second Empire architecture was exceedingly popular throughout North America. The style was first evident in Manitoba in 1881 in the form of an addition to the 1877 St. Mary's Academy located on Winnipeg's Notre Dame Street, now Pioneer Avenue. This was a combination girls' school and nuns' residence -- in effect, a convent. The new main building, designed by L.A. Desy, set the pattern for future convents in Manitoba -- mansard roof, central tower, high first floor with an elevated

staircase, and a ground floor which resembled a very high basement. There was also provision made for religious statuary on the main façade such as in the former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary in St. Pierre-Jolys (1900) and the former Convent of the Daughters of the Cross (1906-10) in St. Adolphe.

A lengthy period of convent construction began during the 1890s and lasted well into the mid 1920s. This movement was largely characterized by Second Empire architecture within Winnipeg, and, in particular, Francophone communities in southern Manitoba east and west of the Red River. Convents which were at the forefront in the Second Empire style were those designed by Joseph A. Sénécal: extension of St. Mary's Academy (1892; demolished); the former St. Jean Baptiste Convent (1897) and St. Michael's Academy, Brandon (1909-10). Sénécal also built, but did not design, an outstanding example of a Second Empire convent in Manitoba -- St. Mary's Academy, Winnipeg (1902-03). Second Empire remained in vogue for smaller convents in rural communities like the extant Elie Convent (1915). An exception to this style was the second, former Grey Nuns Convent in St. François-Xavier (1916) which abandoned the Second Empire style for a design more associated with Tudor-style detailing. The former La Salle Convent (1927) gave way to a less elaborate design to create a simple Classical Revival appearance. After 1910 some Catholic structures began to adopt a Neo-Classical Renaissance flavour, possibly as a reaction to the construction of the Romanesque-styled St. Boniface Cathedral, (1906-08; destroyed by fire in 1968) designed by Montreal architects, Marchand and Haskell, and built by J.A. Sénécal. St. Joseph's Academy, St. Boniface (1911) remains an outstanding example of a French Gothic convent. Often, convents which required remodelling adopted Neo-Classical

elements as seen in the former Maison St. Joseph (1912), Otterburne and the complete remodelling of the former St. Adolphe Convent (1906) in the mid 1920s. Plainer structures, however, replaced the stylishness of earlier convents such as the former La Salle Convent (1927) which was similar in design to municipal halls of the 1914 period.

Convents were not restricted to the French-Catholic portion of Manitoba's population. Several other prominent ethnic groups constructed convents, in particular, the Benedictine Motherhouse and Orphanage (Polish; 1915-1923; demolished) in Arborg and St. Mary's Convent (Ukrainian; 1925; demolished) in Sifton. This latter structure was rather ornate, possibly designed by the Very Reverend Father Ruh, well-known for his designs of the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception, (1930-38), in Cooks Creek and the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Resurrection, (1936-39), in Dauphin.

Convents flourished under the old dual system of education — Protestant and Catholic School Boards in effect in Manitoba from 1870 to 1890. The Manitoba Schools Act of 1890 nationalized or secularized the provincial school system. No longer were the schools to be oriented to the teachings of particular religious groups. Under the new Act, some French-speaking school districts were set up and paid for through the Department of Education. More traditional Catholic education remained accessible to the children of those districts, usually through the convent. Some convents came to serve the system by offering the nationalized instruction during the school days, and Catholic instruction after hours. Some families sent their children to convent schools while continuing to pay the local school levy for schools their children did not attend. It was into

this era which lasted from 1890 to 1915 that the former St. Jean-Baptiste fits along with other such structures during that period of Manitoba convent building.

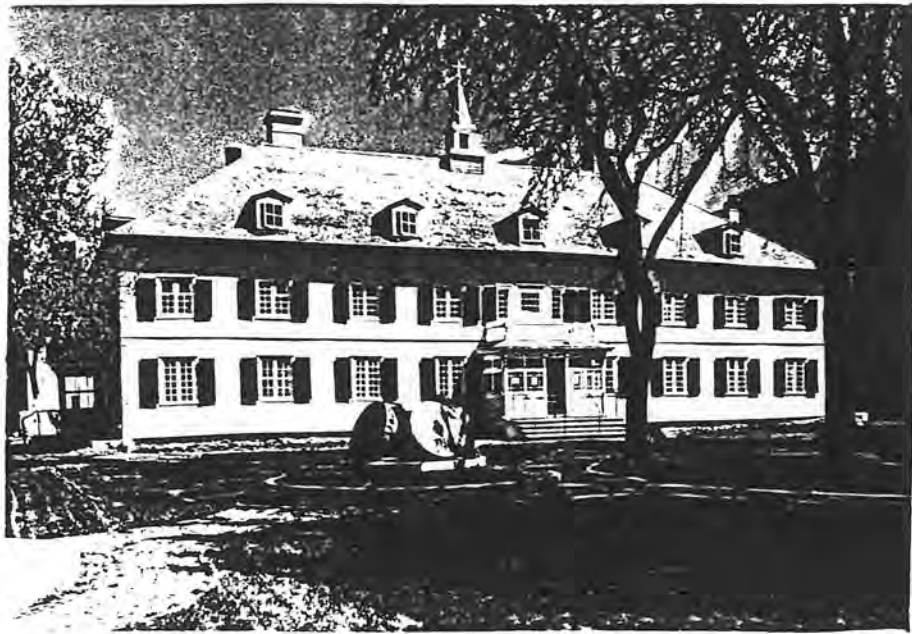
The passage of an act making school attendance compulsory from the ages of 6 to 14 in 1916 and the repeal of the bilingual provisions of the 1890 Act the same year did not favour the convent-school system of Manitoba. The construction of convents by and large slowed after that time, though some convents such as St. Jean-Baptiste continued to flourish. Again, French and Catholic instruction remained an afterhours past-time. In some instances, such as with St. Mary's Academy in Winnipeg, the convents became private schools.

The demise for the convent-schools acting in the public educative capacity came during the 1950s and the 1960s during the era of rural school consolidation. Many smaller schools, including convents, were phased out of service during that time as standardized curricula and buildings swept Manitoba. St. Jean-Baptiste remained part of the school system till the mid1970s with its various educational programs. Convents such as St. Pierre, St. Norbert and Otterburne lost their educative capacity. These were adapted to other uses by the Sisters who operated them -- St. Pierre became the home for retired nuns; St. Norbert became an old people's home, and Otterburne was sold to a Mennonite group for use as a Bible College. Others, lacking a purpose and function were demolished, like St. Agathe, St. Laurent and St. Eustache.¹³

CONVENT BUILDING

DATA SHEETS

The following data sheets are meant to serve as a chronological, factual and visual overview of known, extant convent buildings in Manitoba based on available information current to spring 1996.



Former Grey Nuns Convent, 1846–1851

St. Boniface

Name of Convent: Former Grey Nuns Convent
Grey Nuns
Parish of St. Boniface
Archdiocese of St. Boniface

Location: 494 rue Taché
St. Boniface

Region: Winnipeg

Date Constructed: 1846-1851

Architect/Contractor: Plans were prepared by L'abbé F.X. LaFlèche, later
Bishop of Trois-Rivières, Quebec; two known
builders were Louis Galardeau and Amable Nault,
from "Canada".

Style: Georgian, with domestic "maison traditionnelle"
features of Quebec architecture

Construction: Red River Frame log

Present Function: St. Boniface Museum

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: Yes, 1974, Historic Sites and Monuments
Board of Canada; designated provincial
heritage site, March 21, 1991

Comments: See attached background sheet

REGISTER OF
PROVINCIAL HERITAGE SITES



NAME OF PROPERTY: Former Grey Nuns Convent

SITE LOCATION: 494 Taché Avenue, Saint-Boniface

CURRENT OWNER: The Grey Nuns of Manitoba Inc.
151 Despina Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2H 0L7

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

The former Grey Nuns Convent is recognized historically as the headquarters of a French-Canadian religious order who came to the Red River Settlement in 1844 to provide important works of education and charity. It served as a mission house and provided the Grey Nuns with facilities for the caring for the aged and for orphans, treating the sick and instructing children. It was the first institution of this kind in the West.

The two storey hipped roof structure was constructed of white oaken logs and took nearly six years to construct between 1846 to 1851. The result was a magnificent two-storey Red River frame building which skillfully combined the rectangular symmetrical plan and hipped roof adopted by the Hudson's Bay Company with French Canadian design influences introduced by its designer, L'abbé Louis François Lafèche. It is an outstanding example of early Red River frame construction and one of the oldest dwellings still in use in the Prairie Provinces.

DATE OF DESIGNATION: March 29, 1991



*Former Convent of the Sisters of the
Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, 1897-1898
St. Jean-Baptiste*

Name of Convent: Former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
Parish of St. Jean-Baptiste
Archdiocese of St. Boniface

Location: 144 Caron Street
St. Jean-Baptiste
Rural Municipality of Montcalm

Region: Eastman

Date Constructed: 1897; addition 1910

Architect/Contractor: J.A. Sénécal, Architect, St. Boniface;
1910 addition, J.A. Sénécal and J.A. Hudon

Style: Second Empire

Construction: Brick veneer

Present Function: Antique and gift shop; proposed museum, bed and breakfast and tearoom

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: No

Comments: Served as convent, girls' school and boarding facility; closed in 1992; sold to current owners in 1994.



*Former Convent of the Sisters of the
Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, 1900
St. Pierre-Jolys*

Name of Convent: Former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names
of Jesus and Mary
Parish of St. Pierre-Jolys
Archdiocese of St. Boniface

Location: 432 Joubert Street
Village of St. Pierre-Jolys

Region: Eastman

Date Constructed: 1900

Architect/Contractor: J.A. Sénécal, Architect, St. Boniface

Style: Second Empire

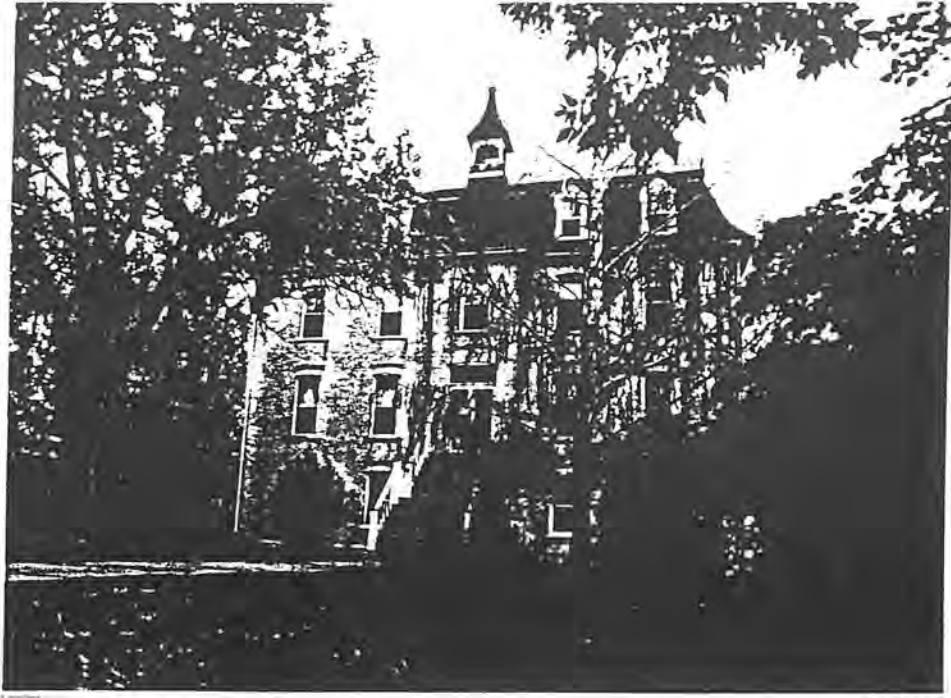
Construction: Brick veneer

Present Function: Musée De St. Pierre-Jolys Inc.

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: Yes, designated provincial heritage site,
February 24, 1989

Comments: See attached background sheet



NAME OF PROPERTY: Former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary

SITE LOCATION: 432 Joubert Street, St. Piere-Jolys

CURRENT OWNER: Musee De St. Piere Jolys Inc.

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

The former Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary is significant as a rare relatively unaltered example of a turn-of-the-century "Second Empire" style convent. The Second Empire style, with its characteristics mansard-shaped roof and decorative metal cresting, flourished in North America from about 1860 to 1885. The style was adopted by the Francophone religious community in Canada and by 1900 had become its trademark. The St. Piere-Jolys convent was designer of Francophone religious architecture in Manitoba and the prairies.

Within the province's Francophone communities, the convent was second in importance only to the local church in terms of social and architectural prominence. In addition to its religious role, it was the principal educational centre for the youth of the district, through which the French element of Manitoba society strove to keep alive their culture and roots.

The former St. Pierre convent was purchased from private hands by the newly established St. Pierre-Jolys Museum Committee in 1986. Some interior rehabilitation has since been done and a reuse study is due to be completed soon. The museum committee intends to apply for a grant to restore the exterior of the building and to convert it for use as a museum and community centre.

DATE OF DESIGNATION: 24 February 1989



St. Mary's Academy, 1902-1903; 1963-1964

Winnipeg

Name of Convent: St. Mary's Academy
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
Parish of St. Ignatius
Archdiocese of Winnipeg

Location: 550 Wellington Crescent
Winnipeg

Region: Winnipeg

Date Constructed: 1902-03; addition 1963-64

Architect/Contractor: Samuel Hooper, Architect, Winnipeg
J.A. Sénécal, Contractor, St. Boniface

Style: Second Empire

Construction: Brick

Present Function: Convent and girls' school

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: No

Comments: Excellent example of Second Empire architecture in Manitoba; owned by Order and active teaching facility.



Former Aubigny Convent, 1904

Aubigny

Name of Convent: Former Aubigny Convent
Daughters of the Cross
Parish of St. Antoine d'Aubigny
Archdiocese of St. Boniface

Location: Aubigny
Rural Municipality of Morris

Region: Central

Date Constructed: 1904

Architect/Contractor: Father M. Desrossiers supervised construction of
the convent

Style: Second Empire

Construction: Wood frame

Present Function: Vacant private residence; up for sale.

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: No

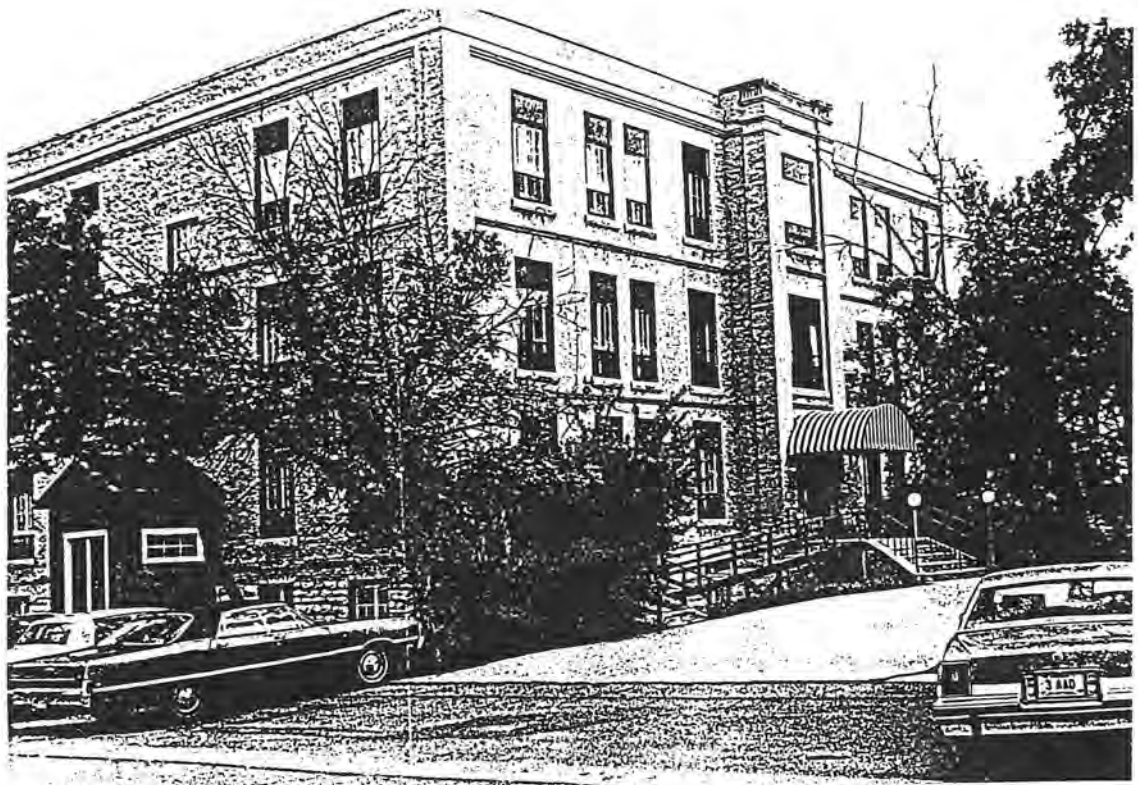
Comments: Originally constructed as a church rectory and
served as such until 1932; as convent from
1932-1967; oldest house in the village



Notre Dames de Lourdes Convent, 1904-1905

Notre Dames de Lourdes

Name of Convent:	Notre Dame de Lourdes Convent Sisters of the Five Wounds Parish of Notre Dame de Lourdes Archdiocese of St. Boniface
Location:	88 Notre Dame Avenue W Village of Notre Dame de Lourdes
Region:	Central
Date Constructed:	1905-06
Architect/Contractor:	Unknown
Style:	Second Empire
Construction:	Wood frame
Present Function:	Convent
Threat of Demolition:	No
Designated Heritage Site:	No
Comments:	Active convent; second smaller convent moved from St. Lucipin with wing connecting two structures.



Former St. Norbert Convent, 1889; 1904-1905

St. Norbert

Name of Convent: Former St. Norbert Convent
Grey Nuns
Parish of St. Norbert
Archdiocese of St. Boniface

Location: 50 rue St. Pierre
St. Norbert

Region: Winnipeg

Date Constructed: 1904-1905 (incorporating a portion of 1889 convent)

Architect/Contractor: J.A. Sénécal, Architect, St. Boniface

Style: Second Empire

Construction: Brick veneer

Present Function: St. Norbert Lodge Senior Citizens Home

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: No

Comments: Convent was a girls' school and boarding facility;
Order vacated building in 1969 and sold it to
current owners; re-opened as seniors' home in
the mid 1970s.

*Completed!
- confirmed!
Eh RJG 30/96*



Former St. Adolphe Convent, 1906–1910; 1928

St. Adolphe

Name of Convent: Former St. Adolphe Convent
Daughters of the Cross
Parish of St. Adolphe
Archdiocese of St. Boniface

Location: St. Adolphe
Rural Municipality of Richot

Region: Eastman

Date Constructed: 1906-1910; 1928

Architect/Contractor: Unknown

Style: Second Empire; Classical Revival

Construction: Brick veneer and stone

Present Function: St. Adolphe Nursing Home

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: No

Comments: Former convent underwent extensive exterior and interior alterations in mid 1920s; now serves as nursing home.



Former Fannystelle Convent, c1907

Fannystelle

Name of Convent:	Former Fannystelle Convent Oblate Sisters of Mary Immaculate Parish of Fannystelle Archdiocese of Winnipeg
Location:	Fannystelle Rural Municipality of Grey
Region:	Central
Date Constructed:	c1907
Architect/Contractor:	Unknown
Style:	Vernacular
Construction:	Wood frame
Present Function:	Private residence
Threat of Demolition:	No
Designated Heritage Site:	No
Comments:	Exterior of structure intact; owners have contacted Historic Resources Branch for information on heritage site designation.



St. Michael's Academy, 1909

Brandon

Name of Convent: St. Michael's Academy
Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions
St. Augustine of Canterbury Parish
Archdiocese of Winnipeg

Location: 10 Victoria Avenue E
City of Brandon

Region: Westman

Date Constructed: 1909

Architect/Contractor: J.A. Sénécal and J.A. Hudon, Architects,
St. Boniface; Thomas Sinclair, Supervising
Architect, Brandon; A. E. Bullock, Contractor,
Brandon

Style: Second Empire

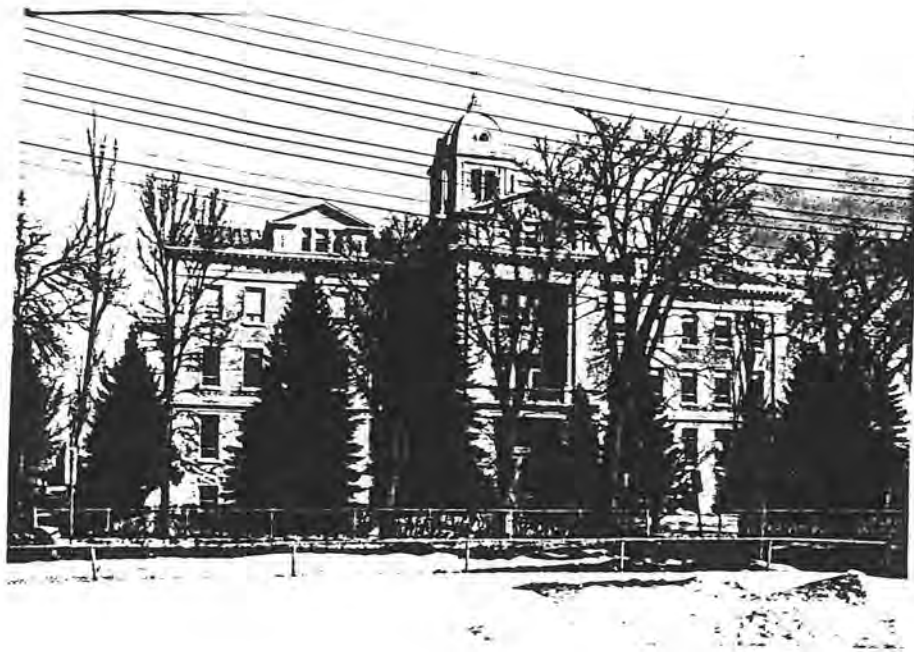
Construction: Brick veneer

Present Function: Infirmary for Sisters; music school

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: No

Comments: Girls' academy and boarding facility until 1977;
now serves as music school and infirmary for the
Order.



St. Joseph's Convent, 1911

St. Boniface

Name of Convent: St. Joseph's Convent
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
Parish of St. Boniface
Archdiocese of St. Boniface

Location: 321 rue Cathedrale Street
St. Boniface

Region: Winnipeg

Date Constructed: 1911

Architect/Contractor: J.A. Sénécal, Architect, St. Boniface

Style: Classical Revival

Construction: Brick

Present Function: Convent

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: No

Comments: A convent, girls' academy and boarding facility until the mid 1960s when St. Boniface College, a boys' college, became a co-ed school; active convent and infirmary for the Order.

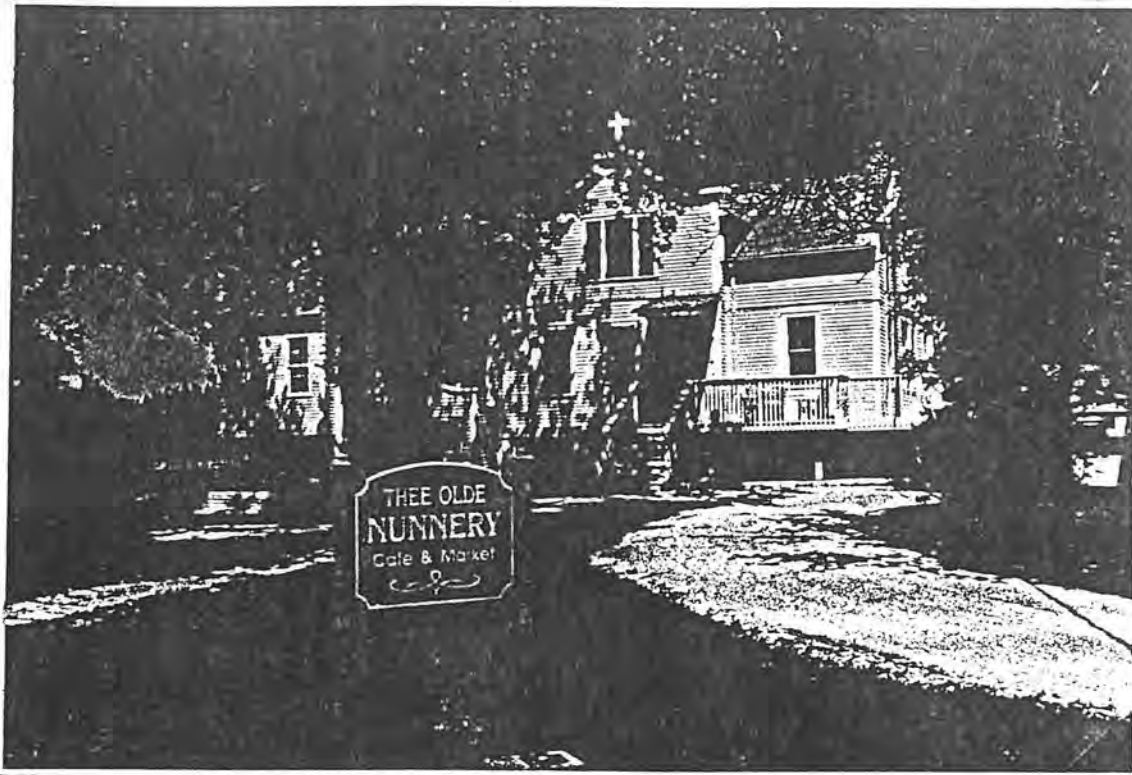


Elie Convent, 1915

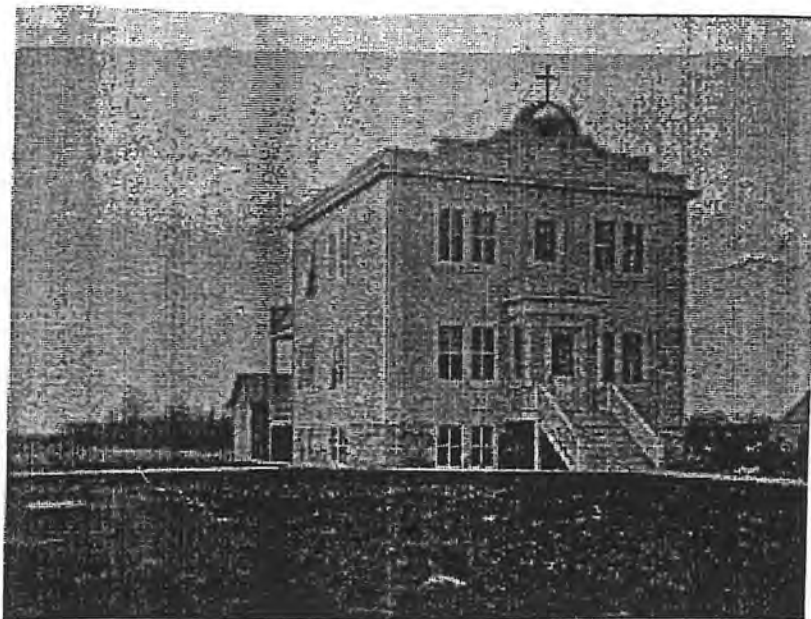
Elie

Name of Convent:	Elie Convent Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions Parish of St. Elie Archdiocese of Winnipeg
Location:	13 Elie Street W Elie Rural Municipality of Cartier
Region:	Central
Date Constructed:	1915
Architect/Contractor:	Father George Bullon supervised construction of the convent
Style:	Second Empire
Construction:	Brick veneer
Present Function:	Convent
Threat of Demolition:	No
Designated Heritage Site:	No
Comments:	Active Convent owned by the Order; also known as St. Martha's House of Prayer; Father George Bullon, Parish priest, was known to be an accomplished builder.

Name of Convent:	Former St. François-Xavier Convent Grey Nuns Parish of St. François-Xavier Archdiocese of St. Boniface
Location:	1033 PTH 26 St. François-Xavier Rural Municipality of St. François-Xavier
Region:	Central
Date Constructed:	1916
Architect/Contractor:	Unknown
Style:	Tudor
Construction:	Wood frame
Present Function:	The Olde Nunnery Cafe and Market
Threat of Demolition:	No
Designated Heritage Site:	Yes - designated municipal heritage site, February 10, 1994
Comments:	See attached background sheet



- SITE NAME:** Former Grey Nuns' Convent
(Thee Olde Nunnery)
- LOCATION:** St. François Xavier, 1033 PTH 26
- OWNER:** Margaret Kentner
- DESIGNATION:** Municipal Heritage Site designation February 10, 1994 by the Council of the R.M. of St. François Xavier
- SIGNIFICANCE:** The Convent was constructed in 1916 for the Grey Nuns of St. François Xavier Parish. When the parish was established in 1828, it was the most westerly church parish in the Red River Settlement. In 1850 the Grey Nuns arrived in St. François Xavier, then known as White Horse Plains, where they ministered to the spiritual and educational needs of Métis society for 118 years. The convent was owned and occupied by this religious order until 1968.
- The original exterior of the two-storey, wood-frame structure has remained unaltered. The gables of the building have a simple Tudor-style detailing. Some interior detailing remains, like transom windows, a wooden balustrade and several small, metal religious ornaments affixed to doors. Recent rehabilitation of the building includes a sympathetically-designed, two-storey addition and a handicapped entrance ramp. The former convent is now a multi-purpose structure housing a restaurant, gallery, craft shop and antique store.



Former La Salle Convent, 1927

La Salle

Name of Convent: Former La Salle Convent
Daughters of the Cross
Archdiocese of St. Boniface
Parish of La Salle

Location: 41 Rue Beaudry
La Salle
Rural Municipality of MacDonald

Region: Central

Date Constructed: 1927

Architect/Contractor: Unknown

Style: Second Empire

Construction: Wood frame

Present Function: Private residence

Threat of Demolition: No

Designated Heritage Site: No

Comments: A private residence for about 25 years and present occupants have owned it for 21 years; exterior intact; some minor interior alterations; owners have contacted Historic Resources Branch for information on site designation.

FOOTNOTES

1. Martha McCarthy, *To Evangelize the Nations: Roman Catholic Missions in Manitoba, 1818-1870*, (Winnipeg: Historic Resources Branch, 1990), p.1.
2. Ibid., pp. 3-6.
3. Ibid., p.28
4. Information on Manitoba convents was generously provided by Corinne Tellier, a private historical consultant and researcher to the Historic Resources Branch.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Information provided to Elaine Kisiow, Historic Resources Branch, by Sister Laura Gosselin, Archivist, Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, St. Boniface.
8. Sources for the list of convents includes the *Catholic Centennial Souvenir, 1812-1912, A Sketch of the Achievements of the Catholic Church in Western Canada*, (Winnipeg: The West Canada Publishing Co., Limited, 1912), *The Northwest Review, 45th Anniversary Number, 1930*, *St. Boniface Historical Society Bulletin, April 1976*, and information arising from general convent research.
9. Information on Manitoba Convents by Corinne Tellier.
10. *A History of St. Jean Convent and Saint-Jean-Baptiste: A Synopsis, 1984* were kindly provided by Sister Laura Gosselin, Archivist, St. Jean-Baptiste Convent, St. Boniface.
11. J.A. Sénécal's biography is adapted from "The Late Mr. J.A. Sénécal", in *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface, XVI*, 1917, pp. 109-110 and the *Catholic Centennial Souvenir, 1812-1912, A Sketch of the Achievements of the Catholic Church in Western Canada*, (Winnipeg: The West Canada Publishing Co., Limited, 1912).
12. M. Cullen, *Grey Nuns' Convent (St. Boniface Museum), 494 Taché Avenue, St. Boniface, Manitoba*, (Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada). pp. 6-7.
13. Randy R. Rostecki, *Vieux Convent (Old Convent), St. Pierre-Jolys, Manitoba*, (Winnipeg: Historic Resources Branch) 1987, pp. 14-15. See also *A Study of Public School Buildings in Manitoba* by David Butterfield, Historic Resources Branch, 1994.

APPENDIX I
RELIGIOUS ORDERS AND CONVENTS
IN THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. BONIFACE, 1930

<i>ORDER</i>	<i>PLACE OF CONVENT</i>
Daughters of the Cross	Aubigny* La Salle* St. Adolphe* St. Claude St. Malo
Grey Nuns	La Broquerie St. Anne des Chênes St. Norbert*
Our Lady of the Missions	Letellier St. Joseph*
Sisters of St. Joseph	Lorette Mariapolis Ste. Genevieve St. Georges
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary	Ste. Agathe St. Jean-Baptiste* St. Pierre-Jolys* St. Boniface*
Sisters of the Saviour	Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes* St. Leon Haywood
Ursuline Sisters	St. Alphonse Bruxelles
Oblate Sisters	Ile des Chênes

Taken From: Northwest Review 45th Anniversary Edition, 1930.

*NOTE: indicates 9 known, extant convent buildings erected prior to 1930

APPENDIX II
RELIGIOUS ORDERS AND CONVENTS
IN THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF WINNIPEG, 1930

<i>ORDER</i>	<i>PLACE OF CONVENT</i>
Oblate Sisters	Fannystelle* Dunrae
Our Lady of the Missions	Elie* St. Eustache St. Rose Brandon* St. Francis-Xavier*
Grey Nuns	St. Francis-Xavier*
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary	Winnipeg*
Franciscans of Mary	St. Laurent

Taken From: Northwest Review 45th Anniversary Edition, 1930.

*NOTE: indicates 5 known, extant convent buildings erected prior to 1930