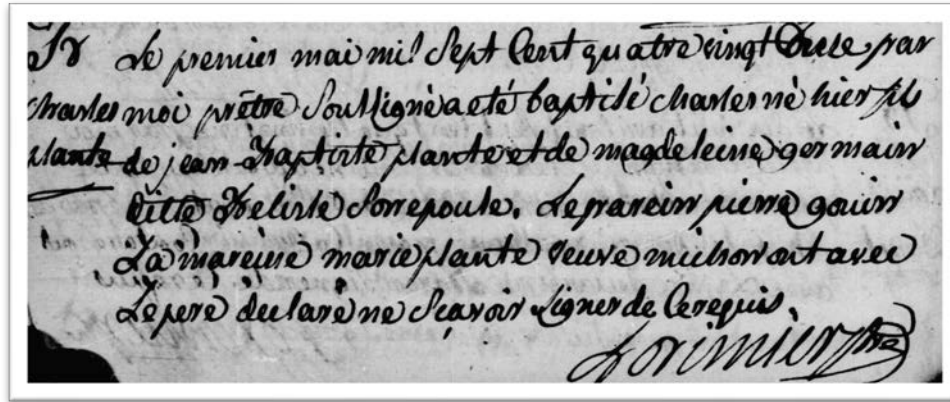


Charles Plante, St. Paul Church Founder

Charles Plante was born on 30 April 1791 and baptized on 1 May 1791 at Quebec's St. Cuthbert Catholic Church in Berthier County. His parents were Jean-Baptiste Plante and Magdeleine Germain Belisle.¹



Charles would later name a son after his father and a daughter after his mother.

Charles died on 15 August 1854 at the house of Charles Rondeau on French Prairie and was buried the next day at the St. Louis Church. He was married to at least six Indian women. The first was an unknown woman who died before 1839. The others were Agathe Cayuse, Susanne Cayuse, Elizabeth Chinook, Pélagie Chinook, and Marguerite Yougoulhta, the widow of J. B. Dubreuil. Charles had children, but no known children survived to have descendants, and the Plante surname disappeared from the Prairie.

St. Paul Church founder. In the 1830s, eighteen French Prairie settlers, including Charles Plante (fifteen were former Hudson's Bay Company employees), felt the need to have their marriages blessed and their children baptized by Catholic priests. Because of their efforts, the St. Paul Catholic Church was established.

Fur Trade

Charles Plante entered service with the Northwest Company (NWC) on 1 January 1809. For this, he received 250 livres for the first year.²

He renewed his NWC service in 1811. He worked in Canada's Athabasca District until 1815, when he was transferred to the Columbia District. In 1821, when the NWC merged with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), he was hired on as a "milieu," the person occupying the middle seat in the canoe. He also served as a hunter on HBC's Snake Country Expeditions.³ He was a respected Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) trapper – considered a "leading man."

The Snake Country expeditions aimed to trap all the beavers that could be found so that competing American fur companies would find nothing – stopping them from moving into HBC territory. The expeditions included parts of Oregon, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, and Northern California.

Charles was named in Peter Skene Ogden's 1829 journal.

"Monday 29th March 1829. In sight of Salt Lake again. As there appears to be a defile for crossing the mountains, I proposed for our men to fish and follow by track of 1826. The Blackfeet and Snakes are now scattered in quest of fish and roots. I am in hopes the party will collect 400 beaver. This leaves me only 14 men and if I may judge from what I saw last fall at an unknown River, we shall require to be on our guard against Indians. It being the first year we have had any intercourse with the Indians they are very shy. Since starting from Fort Nez Perces my party is divided into three. God prosper us all! To the separating party I gave directions to reach the Columbia by the 30th of July, gave the charge to **Plante**."⁴



Fort Nez Perce⁵

John Work continued as the leader of the Snake Country expeditions. On 21 August 1830, Ogden wrote a long letter to Work and provided advice about the routes he should take and the supervision of the trappers. At the conclusion, he penned,

"You will find **Chas. Plante**, Augustin Finlay, Le [Louis] Kanota leading Men, by carefully watching their motions you can easily manage the remainders."⁶

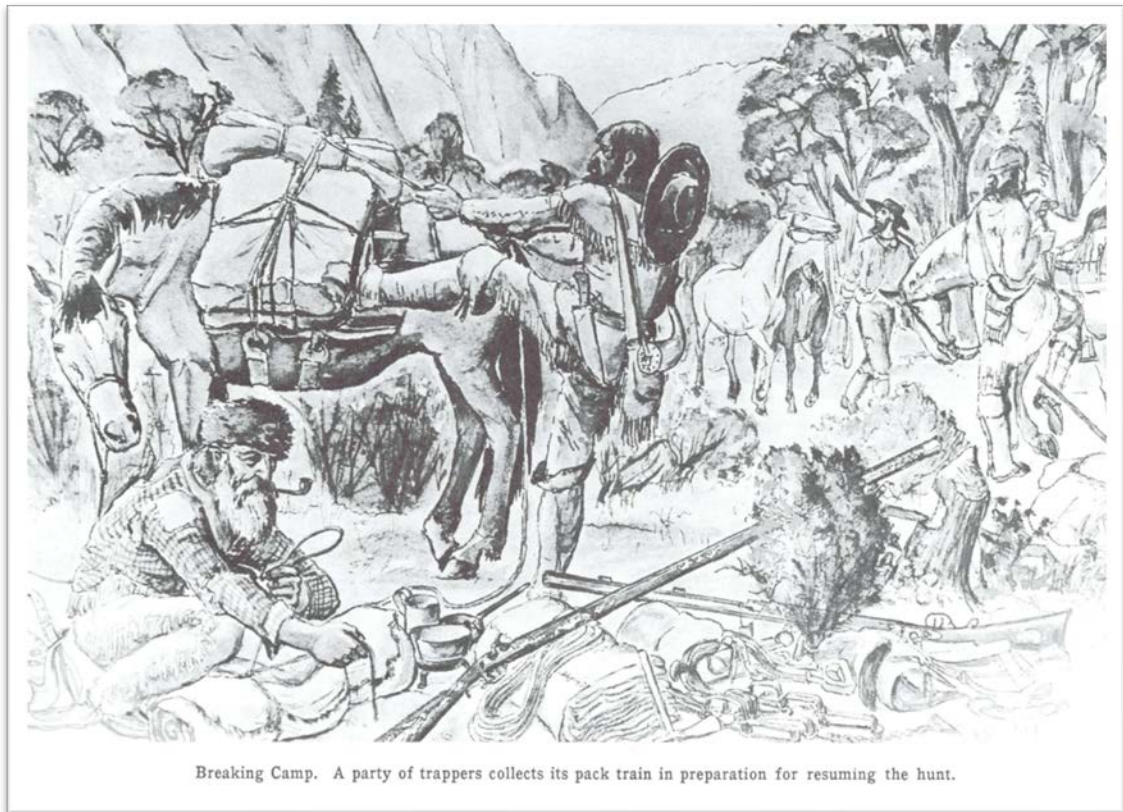
Work mentions Charles in his journals.

"Wednesday, April 27th, 1831. Heavy rain in the night, and stormy with rain all day. The unfavorable weather deterred us from raising camp. The people revisited their traps, and set some more. Twenty beaver were taken, 16 of them in a small rivulet towards the foot of the mountains, which appear never to have been trapped nor even known notwithstanding parties of trappers having so frequently passed this road. **C. Plant**, M. Plant, Bt. Dubrille and J. Desland found it yesterday."⁷

"Thursday, May 12, 1831. Fine weather in the morning, but heavy rain and snow and very cold afterwards. Raised camp and marched 10 miles across the mountains, and encamped on a small rivulet of snow water. The head of *Raft river* appears in a deep valley to the west of us. The road on the mountains hilly and rugged and some places stony, and in places very boggy. The snow still lies in banks of considerable depth, and appears but very recently to have disappeared off most of the ground. The grass is barely beginning to spring up except on small spots exposed to the south, which has been some time clear of snow, where vegetation has made some progress. From the very ruggedness of the road

and the badness of the weather this was a harassing day both on horses and people. For want of water we could not encamp sooner. In order that we may make a better. I separated a party this morning and sent 8 men, viz. **C. Plante** (who is in charge of the party), J. Deslard, F. Champagne, L. Rondeau, L. Quenstall, A. Dumarais, Bt. Dubrielle and A. Longtin to hunt to the Westward on the heads of small rivers which run into *Snake river* and on the Eastern fork of *Sandwich Island River [Owyhee River]*, while I with the remainder of the party proceed to the southward to *Ogden's river [in Utah]*, and then to the head of *Sandwich Island river*. **Plante** was directed to push on and make a good encampment today so that he might get out of the reach of the Black feet who are still following our track, but instead of doing so some of the people who went in pursuit of a horse that followed the party found the encampment only a few miles from our last night's station. If they push on they will in a short time be out of the reach of the Blackfeet.”⁸

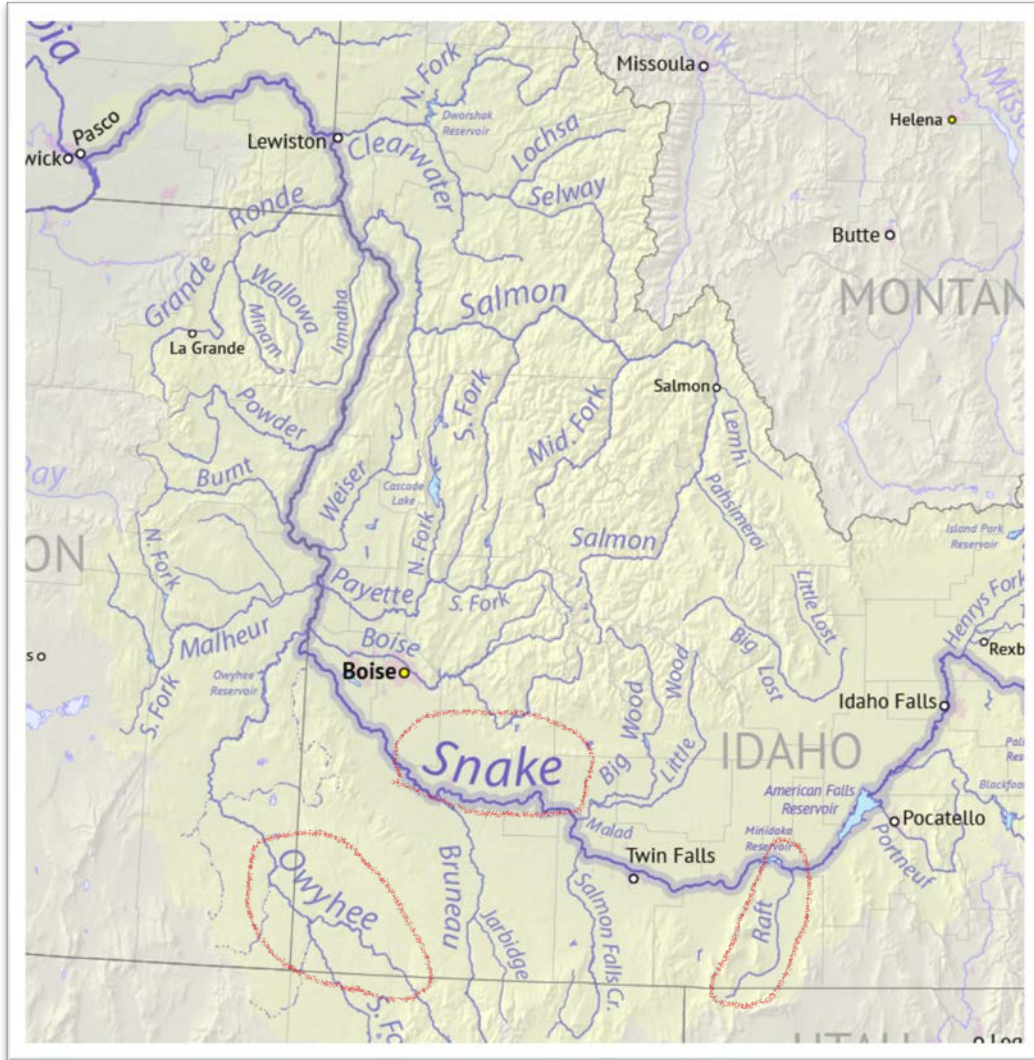
The following sketch shows some of what was involved with breaking camp.⁹



“Thursday, July 19th, 1831. Stormy but warm weather. The different parties who separated from the camp have arrived, **Plante** and party yesterday, the others some time ago. The party whom I left in September had the misfortune to lose the whole of the horses, nearly 30 in number, early in the spring. They imprudently allowed them to stray a short distance from the camp where there were a few Indians in the evening about sunset. The loss was the result of a great degree of negligence on the part of the men. They also put what few skins they had with other articles in cache which the Indians found and carried off, from a pack to a pack and a half of the few beaver they had. The half breeds lost two

of the horses by theft, and made but very few skins. **Plant** and party also found very few beaver, but they lost no horses.”¹⁰

The following map shows the location of Snake River, Owyhee River, and Raft River.¹¹



“Friday, July 20th, 1831. Fine weather. The people whom I left two days ago arrived safe. Since our spring journey commenced we have traveled upwards of 1000 miles, and from the height of the water and scarcity of beaver we have very little for the labor and trouble which we experienced. Previous to taking up our winter quarters last fall we traveled upwards of 980 miles, which, with the different moves made during the winter makes better than 2000 miles traveled during our voyage. Total loss of horses during the voyage, 82, viz.: Stolen by the Blackfeet when P. L. Clay was killed, 3; stolen by the Snake Indians from A. Case and party, 22; stolen by the Snake Indians from my party during winter, 3; stolen by the Snake Indians from the half-breeds in summer after leaving me, 2; died or gave up on the way previous to reaching the three hill plains in the fall, 1 by

Toupin, 1 by Dumas, and 3 by the half breeds when they left the party on Salmon River, 5; died or left crossing the plain in the fall, 26; died during the winter, 11; killed for food by A. Carson and party, 3; killed for food by my party during summer, 5; killed for food by **C. Plante's** party during summer, 1; drowned crossing a river by Royer, 1; total, 82.”¹²

“Sunday 2 Sept 1831 Sultry warm weather. Some of the sick getting a little better, but two more men L. Quintall, J. S. LaRocque & **C. Plant's wife** are taken ill. So many of the people being thus taken with the fever, is of serious consequence. Last year not a man of the party, tho' we were here about this time, took it after we arrived here except an Indian boy, and the most of those who were ill recovered during our stay here, this year it is different, the people are taken ill daily since our arrival here, this is a thing I by no means expected, and might have had the people off two or three days ago but delayed purposely expecting that those who were worst would get better and be more able for the voyage. There are now ten men and some women & boys ill with it less or more. Though I was well supplied with medicines at Vancouver, (but) there is such a heavy demand upon it that it will soon be all done at this rate.”¹³

In 1830, a sailor on the American Brig *Owhyee* brought malaria to Fort Vancouver.¹⁴ The disease spread into the HBC territory. Quinine, the only known treatment, was available at Fort Vancouver, and this is likely the medicine mentioned above. The identity of “C. Plant's wife” is not known. She was dead by 1839 when the Catholic priests arrived at St. Paul. She is likely the mother of Jean Baptiste Plante, born about 1828 and died at St. Paul on 25 May 1843. She was likely the mother of Xavier Plante, born about 1830 and baptized at St. Paul on 27 July 1843.

1832, California with John Work.¹⁵

“Saturday 8 Sept 1832. Stormy yet warm weather. Did not raise camp so that the sick men might have a little repose. Rondeau, Champaigne and J. Favel are a good deal better these three days past. But **C. Plante** has fallen ill. The Bindach [hermaphrodite] gave the men permission to kill two marons [wild horses] which he says belongs to some of his relatives.”¹⁶

“Tuesday 11 September 1832. Fine warm weather. Raised camp & proceeded 4 hours 13 miles S.S.W. to another small creek. **C. Plante** was taken ill with the fever yesterday. The rest of the sick men recovering slowly.”¹⁷

“Wednesday 12 September 1832. Sultry warm weather. Continued our route 4 hours 12 miles S.S.W. to another small fork. **C. Plante** a little better, but one of the women L. Rondeau's wife has relapsed. In the evening a Caiouse [Cayuse] Indian, the Young Chiefs brother came up with us accompanied by another Indian, he is just arrived from the plains, he informs us of two great battles fought with the Blackfeet by the Nezperces & F. Heads and again by these joined by the Americans. The first battle was fought on Salmon river a few days after we left it in the spring, the Blackfeet were very strong, they fought two days & carried off the half of the N. P. & F. H. horses. It was lucky for us that we were off had they come upon us when above the Indian camp we would have most probably lost all our horses & likely the most of ourselves.”¹⁸

“Wednesday 26 September 1832. Cold in the night, & cold cloudy weather during the day. Raised camp and proceeded 3 1/2 hours 11 miles S.E. down the river. The men out with

their traps, 6 beaver taken. **C. Plante** killed an antelope. The tracks of horse thieves seen again.”¹⁹

“Sunday 14 October 1832. Stormy part of the day. Did not raise camp. Took **C. Plante** and J. Favel with me and went 25 to 30 miles South down the valley in hopes of finding a river by which the waters of all these lakes were discharged but without success. On passing a rocky ravine which we saw yesterday another valley with a continued chain of lakes & swamps continued as far as the eye could reach in a Southerly direction. It was long after dark when we returned to the camp. Some of the people were out hunting. L. Kanota killed a sheep. One of the men Bte. Gardipie was going off to the hills to hunt sheep about 10 O'clock in the morning, on approaching the rocks at the bottom of the hill 7 Indians were concealed behind a large stone among the long grass he did not perceive them until he was close too [them] when they immediately started up and discharged their arrows at him two of which passed through his capot and two struck the horse one of which wounded him mortally he was fortunate in getting out of the road where he fired at them but unfortunately missed and seeing some of the people coming to his aid they fled into the rocks where they could not be found. This happened within sight and even within cry of the camp. The villains could have no other motive but to possess themselves of his horse, arms and clothes. It was only this morning I had given orders to the people that should they fall in with any of the natives to use them kindly and endeavour to bring them to camp so that we might get information from them. It will be difficult to keep some of the people on any terms with these men.”²⁰

“Friday 9 November 1832. Frost in the night, fine weather during the day. Proceeded on our journey down the river 12 miles S.W., the road very stony and hilly and in places lay through thickets of underwood. The horses are becoming lame, their hoofs are worn down with continual marching [on] stony road. Numbers of Indians all the way along the river. Some of them returned to the camp in the evening and received a few trifles as presents. **C. Plant** lost one of his horses with a load upon him & was not able to find him, his being left on the way was a piece of great negligence.”²¹

“Saturday 10 November 1832. Frost and fog in the morning, fine weather afterwards. Did not raise camp in order that **Plante** might return in quest of his horse, but he did not find him, probably the Indians picked him up shortly after he was left. Some of the Indians visited us during the day & received some trifles as presents. They also traded a few pieces of dry salmon with the people.”²²

French Prairie

When Charles retired from the HBC, he selected land in what was known as French Prairie due to the growing settlement of retired French Canadian fur trade employees. With the joint occupancy agreement between the United States and Britain, there was no government where land claims could be reported. People “squatted” on land that didn’t conflict with their neighbors. John McLoughlin, HBC Chief Factor, kept retired HBC employees on the books as employees, but no service was expected. This provided a testing period. During that time, if the ex-employee caused trouble, they could be discharged and transported out of the country. McLoughlin provided the new farmers with seed grain, a two-wheeled cart, a plow, two cows, and two steers. Farm implements could be purchased at a discount.²³

Journals for several French Prairie visitors provide information about Charles and his family on French Prairie.

In November of 1835, the U.S. Navy’s William Slacum received a commission from the United States president

“To obtain some specific and authentic information in regard to the inhabitants of the country in the neighborhood of the Oregon, or Columbia river; and, generally, endeavour to obtain all such information, political, physical, statistical, and geographical as may prove useful or interesting to this Government.”

Slacum reached the Columbia River at the end of December 1836.²⁴ He made a census of the thirteen French Canadian farms on the Prairie. The **Charles Plante** farm had two houses that were in good condition. Sixty acres were enclosed, and sixty acres were cultivated. Eight hundred bushels of wheat had been harvested. Wheat was important. With paper money and coins in short supply, wheat was accepted as currency.²⁵ The livestock included twelve horses and fourteen hogs.²⁶

In 1841, Eugene Duflot De Mofras, a French naturalist and explorer, compiled a list of the “Principal French-Canadian Settlers on the Willamette.”²⁷ His list is by year of settlement. Presumably, the settlers or their neighbors told him how long they had been on the land.

Name	When Settled	Hectares Enclosed	Hectares Cultivated	Crop of Wheat Hectoliters	Horses	Houses	Mills
Charles Plants had two houses. He had enclosed 30 hectares and cultivated 30 hectares. He harvested 225 hectoliters of wheat. He had 40 horses.							
Mich. Laframboise	1831	40	20	170	200	2	1
*J. B. Desportes.....	1831	35	20	170	100	3	1
*Joseph Gervais	1832	60	30	225	50	3	1
*J. B. Perrault.....	1832	40	30	225	10	3	
*Jh. Delor	1832	15	15	100	15	2	
*Etienne Luciat	1832	35	30	230	35	4	1
Xavier Lacoste	1832	20	12	95	14	1	
*P. Billique	1833	30	25	195	20	2	
*Jh. Deloze	1833	30	20	175	14	2	
J. Arguette	1833	40	25	185	15	2	
*Xavier Dudevant	1834	17	17	160	18	2	
Andre Longpre	1835	22	12	90	10	2	
Louis Fourrier	1835	17	16	115	20	1	
Charles Plants	1835	30	30	225	40	2	

One hectare is equivalent to 2.47 acres. One hectoliter is equivalent to 2.3 bushels.

Religion

The French Canadians on French Prairie wanted their marriages blessed and their children baptized. On 5 July 1834, they sent a letter to the Bishop of Juliopolis [at Red River, now Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada,] and asked for a priest.

In the fall of 1834, Jason Lee and his fellow Methodist missionaries arrived on the prairie. Joseph Gervais welcomed them, and their first services were held in his home. Lee could not speak French, and the French Canadians could not speak English. Lee penned the following in his diary,

Sun., 19 Oct. 1834— Made a few remarks from these words: “Turn ye from your evil ways,” to a mixed assembly, few of whom understood what I said but God is able to speak to the heart.²⁸

In the spring of 1836, the French-Canadian settlers sent another letter to the Bishop of Juliopolis. **Charles Plante** now had four children. The names of two are known -- a son, Jean Baptiste Plante, born about 1828 and a son, Xavier Plante, born about 1830.

One year later, on 8 March 1837, the “Willammeth Settlers” sent another letter to the Bishop.” Charles Plante was again one of the petition signers.²⁹

Without any other option, some French Canadian families, including the Plantes, attended Jason Lee’s Methodist Mission at Willamette Station. Two children were baptized at the mission.³⁰

Caroline Plante was baptized on 29 November 1837 at Willamette Mission. [This is a new name.]

Baptiste Plante was baptized on 25 January 1838 at Willamette Mission. [He is likely Jean Baptiste Plante.]

In 1834, Ewing Young, an American fur trapper, settled at the base of Chehalem Mountain. Late in 1836, Ewing Young and Lawrence Carmichael planned to build a distillery. On 2 January 1837, Jason Lee’s Oregon Temperance Society wrote a letter to Young and Carmichael. They asked that the distillery not be built and pledged sums to “enable them to give up their enterprise.” Charles Plante was one of the signers, and he pledged six bushels of wheat.³¹

The Methodist Mission ran a store. On 19 November 1838, Charles Plante sold 24 bushels of oats to the store for \$10.00. On the same day, he was paid \$3.00 for three days work on Dr. White’s house. The \$13.00 was applied to his orders on the HBC Company store.³²

The Priests arrive

In November 1838, Fathers Francois Norbert Blanchet and Modeste Demers arrived at the St Paul wooden church the settlers had built for them.

After visiting the local French-Canadian settlements, the first St. Paul mass was held on 6 January 1839. Subsequent masses were held until 3 February 1839 and then from 13 May to 10 June 1839. The sacraments were recorded in the Vancouver register.



--Replica of the first St Paul Church

The Plante marriage was one of the first marriages performed by Rev. Blanchet.

“This 21 January, 1839, in view of the dispensation of 2 bans of marriage granted by us priest Missionary, and the publication of the third between **Charles Plante**, of Saint Cutbert [*sic*], district of Montreal, in Canada, and farmer of this place, on the one part, and **Agathe Kaôus** by nation, on the other part; nor any impediment being discovered, we priest undersigned Missionary, have received their mutual consent of marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in presence of Jean Baptiste Dupati and of Pierre Stanislas Jacquet, witnesses, before whom the said groom has recognized as his legitimate children with **another woman now dead, Jean Baptiste, aged 11 years, and Xavier aged 9 years**. The said spouses have not known how to sign or could the witnesses. F .N . Blanchet”³³

In October of the same year, when restrictions concerning the mission’s location were removed, Father Blanchet took up his residence in the St. Paul chapel, which was still unfinished after

being “removed and rebuilt.” He hired a man to fix the loose flooring, put in some partitions and a ceiling, and perhaps help mount the 80-lb. bell that the priest had brought with him “on a platform over the doorway.” An old lithograph showing the only known picture of the chapel indicates that the platform over the door was later enclosed to form a conventional belfry tower.

“This 17 January, 1840, we priest undersigned missionary have baptized at home in a state of sickness, **Jean Baptiste**, aged about 12 years, **legitimate son of Charles Plante and of . . .** of the mission of St. Paul. Godfather Charles Rondeau who has not known how to sign.”³⁴

“This 6 January, 1842, we priest undersigned have buried in the cemetery of this parish the body of **Agathe, wife of Charles Plante**, farmer of this place deceased yesterday morning, aged about 22 years. Present Charles Plante and Joseph Gervais who have not known how to sign.”³⁵

“This 7 February, 1842, in view of the dispensation of one ban of marriage granted by us undersigned, and the publication of two others between **Charles Plante**, farmer of this place, **widower of Agathe**, on one part, and **Susanne Kohoss** by nation, on the other part, nor any impediment being discovered, nor opposition, we priest undersigned missionary have received their mutual consent of marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in presence of Amable Arquoite and of Louise Auent, witnesses, who have not known how to sign, as well as the spouses.”³⁶

In September 1842, Dr. Elijah White, the first Oregon Indian Agent, arrived in the Willamette Valley with a wagon train of settlers. This was a return home for him. In 1836, the Methodist Church appointed him as a physician to the Willamette Valley mission. In 1841, due to differences with Jason Lee over mission policies, White resigned and returned to the States.

White made a census of settlers in the Oregon Territory. He intended to show that it was possible to farm the Territory and that the British had a foothold with their retired HBC employees. Unless American settlers moved in, the Canadians (British) would be the majority. The Territory was under the “joint occupancy” agreement. Still, an overwhelming number of British settlers could tip the balance of power, and Oregon could become an English possession. His census included the numbers of men, women, and children, and a summary of their crops for the years 1842-43.

The Charles Plant family was included in this census.³⁷ He had two children.

Names of heads of Families	Males 18 yrs & over	Females 18 yrs & over	Children of both sexes under 18 yrs	Aeres under improve ^{ment}	Amount of Wheat in 1842	Amount of Corn Grain	No of Horses	No of Cattle	No of Sheep	No of Hogs
Amnt brot up	208	141	342	5739	29548	15497	2423	3236	39	1603
John Larocson	1	1	1				3	12		5
Charles Plant	1		2	100	400	160	12	11		5

Vital events related to the Plante family continued to be entered in the St. Paul register revealing other people who lived with the family.

“The 19 December, 1842, we priest undersigned have baptized Magdeleine born the 15 of this month, legitimate child of **Charles Plante** farmer and of **Suzanne** of this parish. Godfather Louis Laroque, godmother Marie Laroque who have not known how to sign.”³⁸

“The 10 January, 1843, we priest undersigned have buried in the cemetery of this parish the body of **Suzanne**, deceased 2 days ago aged about 20 years, wife of **Charles Plante** farmer of this parish. Present **Charles Plante**, Louis Aussan and several others who have not known how to sign.”³⁹

“The 22 January, 1843, we priest undersigned have baptized Agathe, young Indian girl aged about 10 years, living at the house of **Charles Plante** in this parish. Godfather **Charles Plante** who has not known how to sign.”⁴⁰

“The 27 January, 1843, we priest undersigned have buried in the cemetery of this parish the body of Agathe, deceased the day before, aged about 10 years, born of infidel parents and living at the house of **Charles Plante**, baptized some days ago. Present Louis Labonte and **Charles Plante** who have not known how to sign.”⁴¹

“The 24 April, 1843, after the publication of one ban of marriage and the dispensation of two others, we priest undersigned, missionary for this country, have received the consent of marriage of **Charles Plante**, farmer, of-age **widower of Susanne** of this parish on one part, and **Elizabeth Chinook**, living also in this parish, on the other part, and have given them the nuptial benediction in presence of Joseph Tse and of John GrosLouis who alone has signed.”⁴²

“This 25 May, 1843, we priest undersigned have buried in the cemetery of this parish the body of **Baptiste**, legitimate son of **Charles Plante**, farmer of this place, and of the late . . . Indian. Present John GrosLouis and Andre, Indian. He was aged 16 years.”⁴³

“This 27 July, 1843, we priest undersigned have baptized **Xavier**, aged 13 years, legitimate son of **Charles Plante**, farmer, and of the late ___ Godfather Thomas, godmother Marie Lafleur.”⁴⁴

“The 23 October, 1843, we priest undersigned have buried in the cemetery of this parish the body of **Elizabeth**, deceased 2 days ago, aged about 14 years, wife of **Charles Plante**, farmer of this parish. Present Pierre GrosLouis and John GrosLouis undersigned.”⁴⁵

“This 18 December, 1843, seeing the dispensation of Forbidden Times and that of the publication of three bans, granted by us priest undersigned between **Charles Plant** domiciled in this place, widower in the last marriage of the late Lisette, on one part, and **Pelagie Tchinouk** on the other part, nor any impediment being discovered, we priest undersigned have received their mutual consent of marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in presence of Amable Petit.”⁴⁶

Provisional Government

In 1843, wagons filled with resettlers arrived in the Oregon Territory. An estimated 125 people arrived in Oregon in 1842, and 875 people arrived in Oregon in 1843.⁴⁷

These newcomers outnumbered the French Canadians and foreshadowed changes that would come to French Prairie. Up to this time, the Territory was under joint control of Britain and the United States, and the HBC was the de facto government.

On 2 May 1843, the settlers met at Champoeg to decide if a Provisional Government should be established as a preliminary step for aligning with the United States. By a 52 to 50 vote, the Provisional Government measure won.⁴⁸ Charles was one of the 50 votes against the government.

Taxation was an issue at the meeting, and a resolution was adopted that there would be no taxes. Instead, there would be a voluntary subscription. Unfortunately, that subscription did not bring in enough money to run the government. In 1844, the legislature passed a voluntary tax. There was a “catch” to the voluntary part. If a person did not pay the tax, he would not be allowed to vote or to defend his rights in court. The rights included land ownership and debts.⁴⁹

In 1844, Charles paid 90 cents tax on

- Horses valued at \$120,
- Cattle valued at \$180, and
- Hogs valued at \$20.⁵⁰

Oregon’s provisional government permitted inhabitants to stake out claims and survey them by using the metes and bounds method. Any white male could claim 640 acres, and within six months of recording their claim, they were to build a home.⁵¹

Charles did not file for a provisional land claim, but he was named as a neighbor to Joseph Gingras on the “Grand Prairie” – the St. Louis area. Other neighbors were Joseph Gingras, Jean Gingras, and J. B. Toupin – all Grand Prairie residents.⁵²

GINGRAS, Joseph, Champoick Dist, "Grand Prairie." Chas. Plante on N; J. B. Toupin on S; Jean Gingras on W; marsh land on E. "Claim is laid out in a squate form according to the cardinal points." Hold without occupancy. 17 Oct. 1845. V I p34

Back to the St. Paul register.

“The 23 March 1847, I have baptized a little girl aged 2 years daughter of a mixed-blood Wayi [Owyhee], interpreter of the Army, living at the house of **Plante**. I have called her Elisabeth. The godfather has been **Plante**.”⁵³

“The 20 June, 1848, we the undersigned priest have baptized an Indian woman sheltered at the house of **Charles Plante** for many years, and dangerously ill.”⁵⁴

“The 24 September, 1848, we the undersigned priest have given baptism to an Indian woman, widow of one Wagui, coming from Fort Vancouver, at the house of **Plante**. We have given her the name of Marie. The godfather has been the elder **Plante**.”⁵⁵

“The 18 November, 1848, we the undersigned priest have buried in the cemetery of this parish the body of Marie, Indian, deceased yesterday at the house of **Plante**, in the presence of Amable Petit.”⁵⁶ [Amable Petit was the St. Paul Church verger.]

“The 23 September, 1851, by us priest undersigned has been buried in the cemetery the body of **Pelage wife of Plante** deceased yesterday aged 60 years. Present **Charles Plante** and Francois Rolland who have not undersigned.”⁵⁷

“The 17 December, 1851, **Charles Plante and Marguerite**, widow [of J. B.] Dubreuil, having obtained of Monsigneur the Archbishop of Oregon City the double dispensation of prohibited time and that of three banns of marriage we undersigned priest officiating at the mission of St. Paul [their - crossed out] have received their mutual consent to marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in the presence of Louis Lucier and of Joseph Despart, who have not undersigned. One word erased nul.”⁵⁸

Donation Land Claims

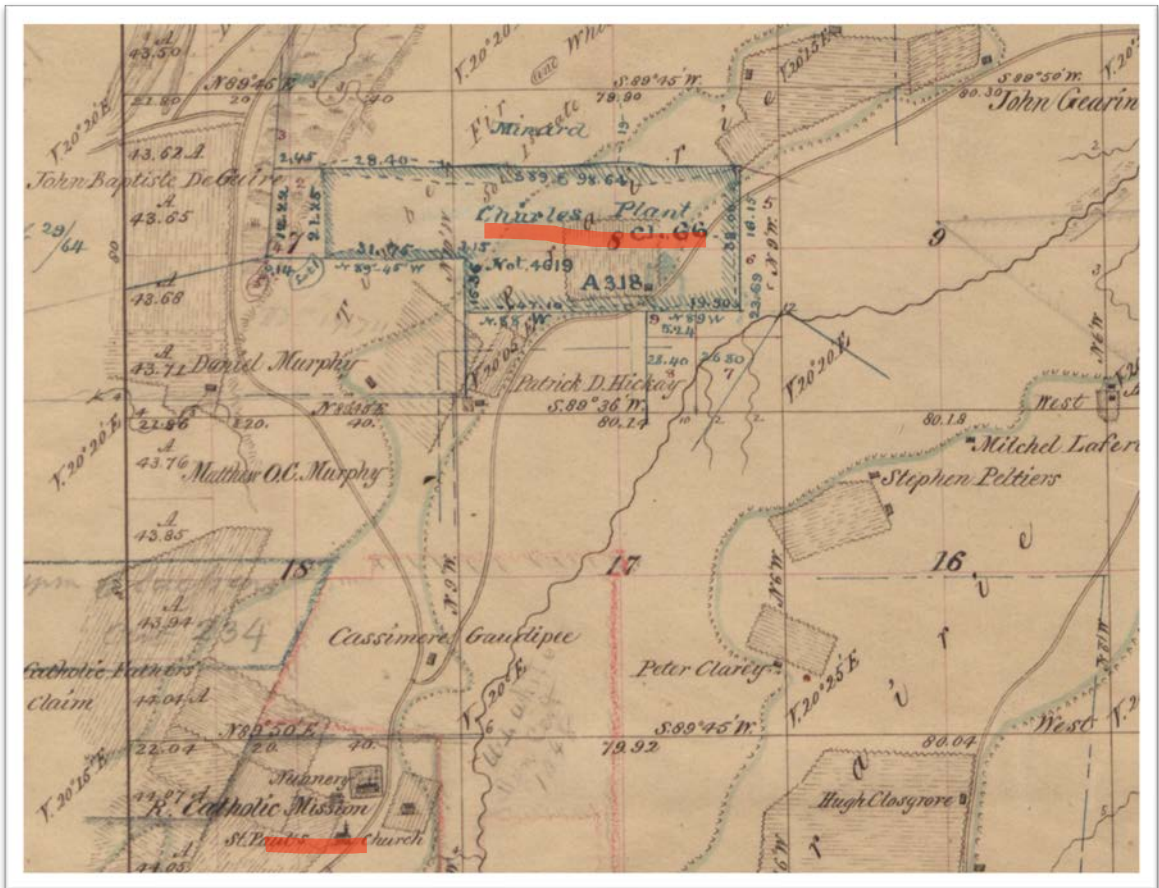
The provisional land claims became null and void when the United States Congress passed the Donation Act of 1850. That act, effective on 1 December 1850, gave 320 acres to every white settler or American half-breed Indian who was over eighteen-years of age and who filed a claim. For married men, their wives received 320 acres in their own right, and proof of marriage had to be submitted.

Summary of the documents in the land claim.⁵⁹

The 318 acres were in Township 4S, Range 2W, sections 7 and 8.

No. 2961 PLANT (X), Charles, Marion Co; b 1784, Canada; Arr. Ore. 20 July 1851; SC 24 Aug 1852; m Marguerite abt. 20 Nov 1851, Marion Co, Ore. T. Filed intention to become cit. 24 Aug 1852, Clackamas Co, Ore. T. Absent in Cal. Feb to 1 June 1854, family remained on c. Charles Plant d 15 Aug 1854. Charles Rondeau gave aff. that Plant "died at my house while on his return from the Surveyor General's office." Geo. (X) Rondeau gave aff. that "Plant died at my father's house, having become ill on way home. . . " 22 Dec 1863 Geo. Aplin & Michael O'Laughlin signed Oath of Allegiance as purchasers of c. Aff: Wm. A. Goulder, Peter (X) Waggoner, Joseph (X) Despar.

The following 1852 GLO survey shows the location of Charles Plant's claim and the St. Paul Church.⁶⁰



The image of his DLC is superimposed on a current Google Earth map.



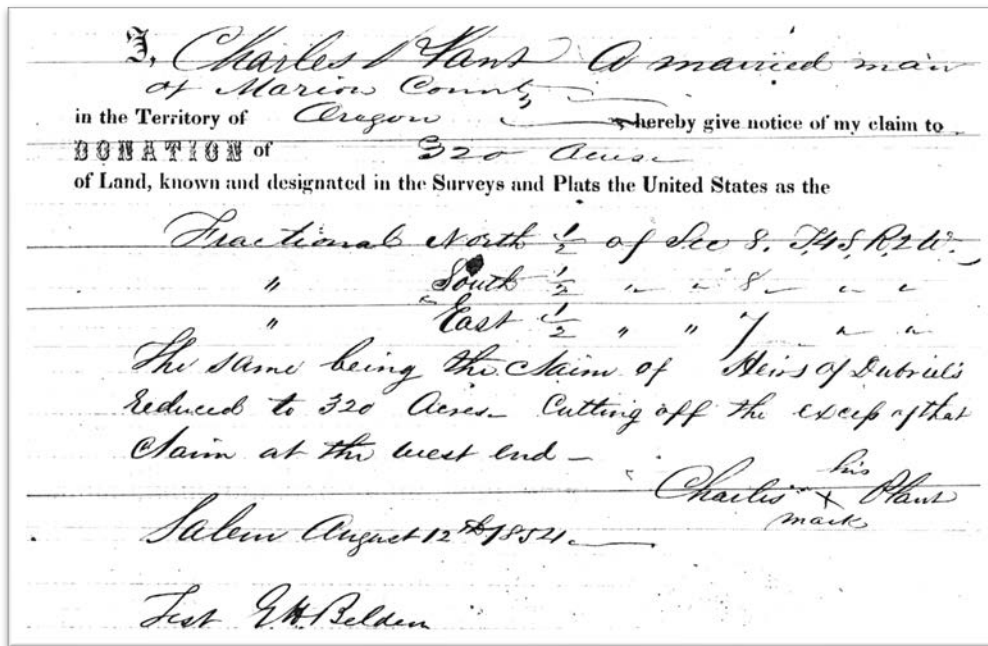
Discrepancies

- According to the DLC testimony, Charles said he arrived in Oregon on 20 July 1851, but he was on the Prairie in the 1830s.
- Charles's wife, Pelagie died on 22 September 1851, and he married Marguerite, widow of J. B. Dubreuil on 17 December 1851. Marguerite was the wife named in his DLC.
- Charles' DLC was located one and one-half miles north of the St. Paul Church. However, in 1845, he was named as a neighbor on the Grand Prairie which is south of the St. Paul Church.
- A close-up view of the land claim shows the location of the house (the black square in the yellow mark) and the cultivated land (the hash-marked area enclosed in red.) The

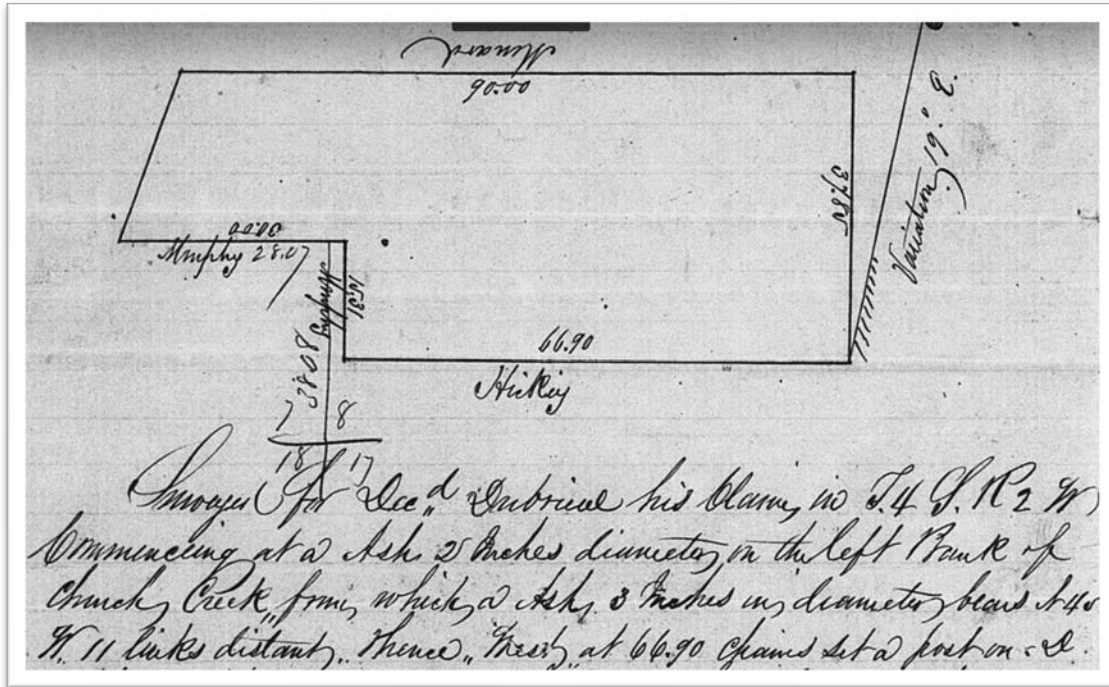
cultivated area is about 40 acres. In 1842, Charles had 100 cultivated acres. This is another item that shows this DLC is different from his earlier claim.



- The following document from his DLC file describes the claim – “The same being the claim of Heirs of Dubriel’s reduced to 320 Acres Cutting off the except of that claim at the west end.”⁶¹



As noted above, on 17 December 1851, Charles married “Marguerite, widow Dubreuil.” John Baptist Dubruiel applied for a DLC, but he died in California before the Land Act took place.⁶² His rejected land claim file described his claim, and it is identical to Charles’s claim.

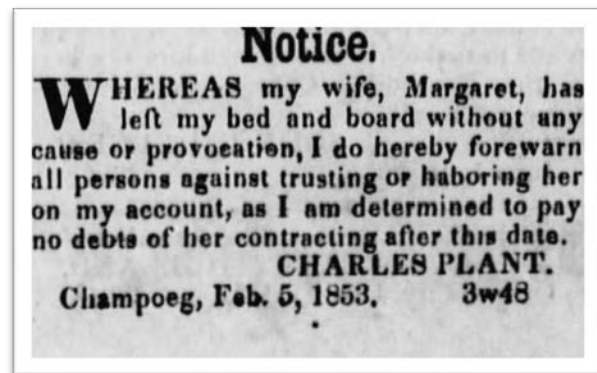


J. B. Dubruiel was on his claim since 25 December 1842. He went to California in May 1849 and died there in September 1849. His children were Michel, Jean B, Sophie, Isaac, Francis, and Therese.

J. B.'s claim was "covered by claim of Charles Plante."

Clearly, Charles married J. B. Dubruiel's widow and took over his claim north of the St. Paul Church.

Margaret is named as Charles's wife in the donation files. However, as this newspaper notice from the 5 February 1853 Weekly Oregon Statesman shows, the marriage was not secure.⁶³



When Margaret's daughter, Sophie Dubreuil, married Manuel Felix on 21 November 1853 at St. Paul, **Charles Plante** and **Francois Xavier Plante** were witnesses. Charles was named as stepfather, and Francois Xavier was named as a stepbrother – meaning Charles was his father.

"The 21 November, 1853, after the publication of three banns of marriage made at the sermons of the parish Masses of this mission as well as that of St. Louis as it appears by the certificate of the missionary, between Manuel Felix, domiciled at St. Louis, of-age son of Antoine

Felix, farmer and of the late Marguerite des Chaudières, of the same place, on the one part; and Sophie Dubreuil, domiciled at St. Paul, minor daughter of the late Jean Baptiste Dubreuil, during his lifetime farmer, and of **Marguerite Tchinouk**, of the same place, on the other part, nor having been discovered any impediment to the said marriage and with the consent of the mother of the bride, and the relatives of the groom, we undersigned have received their mutual consent to marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in the presence of Antoine Felix Palaquin, father, David Mongrain friend of the groom, and of **Charles Plante stepfather**, of **Francois Xavier Plante** stepbrother of the bride who as well as the spouses could not sign.”⁶⁴

No further St Paul entries were made for the Plante family, but Charles Plante appears in the St. Louis parish registers – suggesting he was no longer living on his donation claim that was north of the St. Paul Church.

“The 20 June 1853, we undersigned parish priest of St. Louis after the publication of 3 banns of marriage made at the sermon of our parish masses of St. Paul, three consecutive Sundays, between Louis Quintal of the parish of St. Paul, minor son of Laurent Quintal and of Marianne Nepicing by whose consent it proceeds, on the one part; and Cecile Norouest minor daughter of Baptiste Norouest and of Julie Walla Walla on the other part; and not having encountered any impediment, have received their mutual consent to marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in the presence of Laurent Quintal, Silvain Bourgeau, **Charles Plante**, Casimir Gardepie, who could not sign.”⁶⁵

“The 7 September 1853, after the publication of two banns of marriage between Pierre Dechands, of-age son of Francois Dechands and of an Indian woman deceased at the Rouge River on the one part; and Marie Monique minor daughter of Louis Monique and of Charlotte Tchinook deceased in California, the dispensation of the third bann being obtained and not having, furthermore, encountered any impediment, and Augustin Russy and **Charles Plante** having previously certified that the said Pierre Dechamp was not held back by any tie of marriage, we undersigned parish priest of St. Louis have received their mutual consent to marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in the presence of **Charles Plante**, Cyrille Bertrand and **Xavier Plante**. The last has signed with us.”⁶⁶

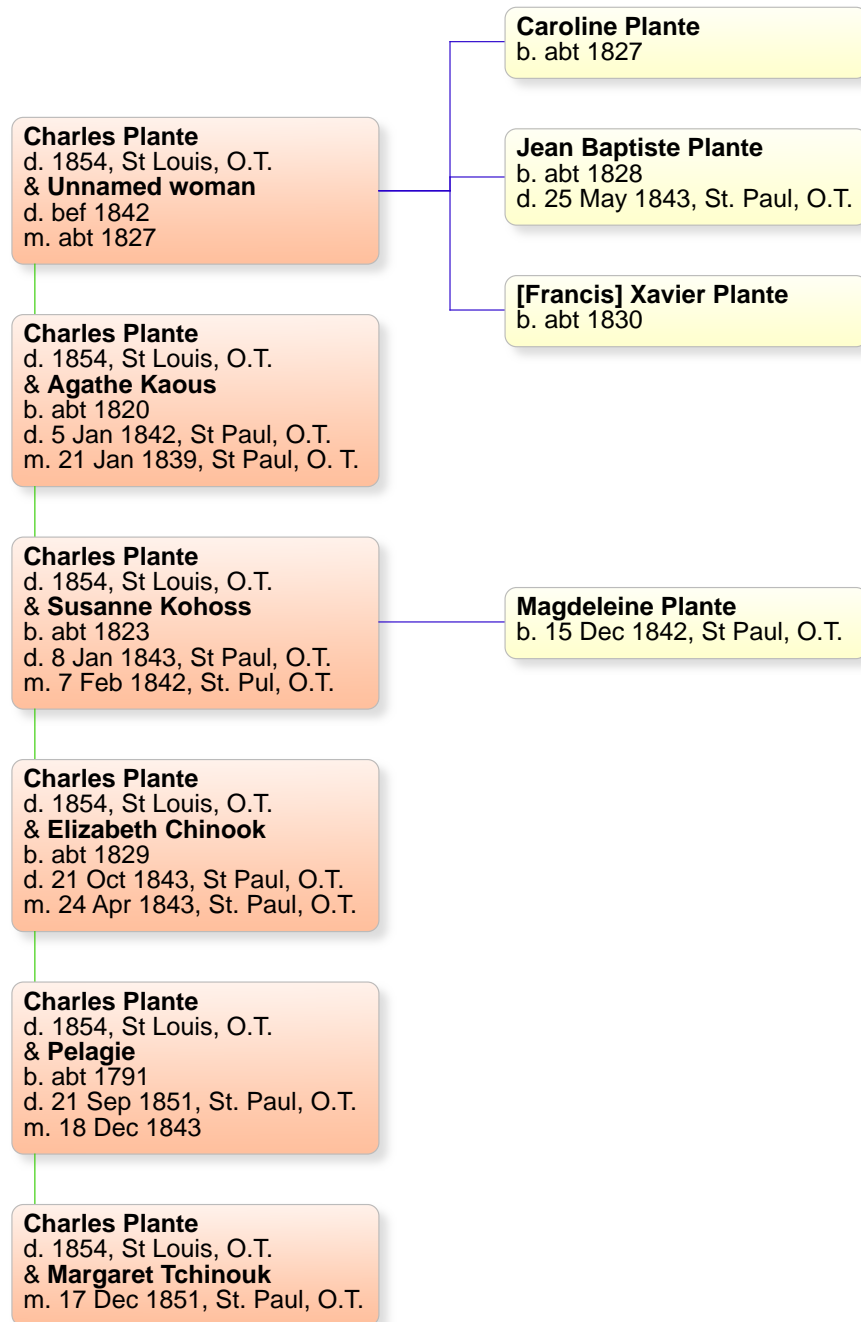
“The 16 August 1854, we undersigned parish priest of St. Louis have buried **Charles Plante** deceased the day before at the house of Charles Rondeau, aged about 70 years, in the presence of Georges Rondeau, Antoine Bonenfant who could not sign. “⁶⁷

Marguerite Plante, of Marion County, Oregon, sold 240 acres of the Plante donation claim to “Baptiste Dubray on 25 August 1857. The purchase price was \$1.00.⁶⁸ Given the illiteracy of the early French Canadians, it is likely that this is Jean Baptiste Dubreuil, Marguerite’s son.

Children

Charles Plante had six known wives and four known children.

Xavier Plante is the only child to be named in French Prairie church registers after 1850, and that was on 7 September 1853 at St. Louis. At that time, he “signed” his name, indicating some literacy. A Xavier Plant died on 25 June 1883 in Douglas County, Oregon. He may be Charles’s son.⁶⁹



End Notes

- ¹ (Mrs.) Raymonde Gauthier, “Ancestry of French Canadians to Oregon Prior to 1842,” Thesis (Quebec City, Quebec; Laval University, 2013), #100; <http://www.oregonpioneers.com/FrenchCanadianFamilyHistory.pdf>. Québec/Fonds Drouin/St-St-Cuthbert/1790/1791/ © Drouin Institute; d1p_1162b0003.jpg <https://www.genealogiequebec.com/img/acte/492506>.
- ² Gauthier, “Ancestry of French Canadians to Oregon Prior to 1842.”
- ³ Charles Plante’s Hudson’s Bay Company Biographical Sheet; https://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/_docs/hbca/biographical/p/plante_charles.pdf
- ⁴ Peter Skene Ogden. “Journal of Peter Skene Ogden; Snake Expedition, 1828-1829.” *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 11, no. 4 (1910), 392; *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609846>.
- ⁵ Jennifer Ott, “Ruining the Rivers in the Snake Country, The Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fur Desert Policy,” p. 167; *NPS.gov*, <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/DownloadFile/485287>.
- ⁶ Burt Brown Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin Written at Fort Vancouver, 1829 - 1832* (Portland, Oregon; Binford & Mort, 1948), 125 – 28.
- ⁷ T. C. Elliott, “Journal of John Work’s Snake Country Expedition of 1830-31. Second Half.” *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 14, no. 3 (1913), 284; *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609938>.
- ⁸ T. C. Elliott, “Journal of John Work’s Snake Country Expedition of 1830-31, p. 290.
- ⁹ *The Fur Trade, The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings* (Washington, D.C.; United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1960), 52; *National Park Service*, <http://npshistory.com/publications/nhl/theme-studies/fur-trade.pdf>.
- ¹⁰ T. C. Elliott, “Journal of John Work’s Snake Country Expedition of 1830-31, p. 313-14.
- ¹¹ “Raft River,” (2024, February 5). In *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raft_River.
- ¹² T. C. Elliott, “Journal of John Work’s Snake Country Expedition of 1830-3, p. 314.
- ¹³ Maloney, Alice Bay, and John Work. “Fur Brigade to the Bonaventura: John Work’s California Expedition of 1832-33 for the Hudson’s Bay Company.” *California Historical Society Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (1943), 195. <https://doi.org/10.2307/25155793>.
- ¹⁴ David A. Bainbridge, “The Hudson’s Bay Company Brigades of 1832 – 33 and “Malaria Epidemic in California; Chapter 3” from *The Fur War in the West: Ecological and Cultural Consequences* (San Diego, CA; Redondo Press).
- ¹⁵ Maloney, Alice Bay, and John Work. “Fur Brigade to the Bonaventura: John Work’s California Expedition of 1832-33 for the Hudson’s Bay Company.” *California Historical Society Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (1943): 196, 198, 203, 208, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25155793>.
- ¹⁶ Maloney and Work, “Fur Brigade to the Bonaventure,” p. 197.
- ¹⁷ Maloney and Work, “Fur Brigade to the Bonaventure,” p. 198.
- ¹⁸ Maloney and Work, “Fur Brigade to the Bonaventure,” p. 198.
- ¹⁹ Maloney and Work, “Fur Brigade to the Bonaventure,” p. 200.
- ²⁰ Maloney and Work, “Fur Brigade to the Bonaventure,” p. 203 – 4.
- ²¹ Maloney and Work, “Fur Brigade to the Bonaventure,” p. 207.
- ²² Maloney and Work, “Fur Brigade to the Bonaventure,” p. 208.
- ²³ John A. Hussey, *Champoeg: Place of Transition* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1967), 51, 52.

- ²⁴ Forsyth, John, and William A. Slacum. "Slacum's Report on Oregon, 1836-7." *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 13, no. 2 (1912): 175-224; *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609903>.
- ²⁵ "Wheat for the West," *Oregon State University* (<https://terra.oregonstate.edu/2012/06/wheat-for-the-west/>).
- ²⁶ "Slacum's Report on Oregon, 1836-7," 210.
- ²⁷ Nellie Bowden Pipes. "Extract from Exploration of the Oregon Territory, the Californias, and the Gulf of California, Undertaken during the Years 1840, 1841 and 1842 by Eugene Dufлот de Mofras." *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 26, no. 2 (1925): 151-90; *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20610311>.
- ²⁸ Jason Lee, "Diary of Reverend Jason Lee—III." *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 17, no. 4 (1916): 397-430; *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20610056>.
- ²⁹ Letters to the Bishop of Juliopolis, Red River, from the Willamette Settlement, March 22, 1836 and March 8, 1837," Mss 83, Catholic Church in Oregon; Originals at Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon.
- ³⁰ Mission Record Book, Methodist Episcopal Church, Willamette Station, Oregon Territory, North America, commenced 1834," Mss 1224, Methodist Missions; located at Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon.
- ³¹ "Slacum's Report on Oregon, 1836-7," 23-24.
- ³² "Methodist Mission Store Collection," University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, Oregon.
- ³³ Harriet Duncan Munnick and Mikell DeLores Wormell Warner, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest, Vancouver, Volume 1* (St Paul, Oregon: French Prairie Press, 1972), p. 34, M-27.
- ³⁴ Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest: St. Paul, Oregon 1839-1898* (Portland, OR: Binford & Mort, 1979), Vol. 1, p. 4, B-10.
- ³⁵ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 41, S-10.
- ³⁶ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 43, M-11.
- ³⁷ "Lists of settlers West of Rockies, 1842 by Elijah White, Indian Agent," *FamilySearch* DGS 8276177, image 119; citing List of Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1842 - 1880, Oregon Superintendency, *NARA* M234, reel 607, image 114.
- ³⁸ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 65, B-90.
- ³⁹ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 65, S-12.
- ⁴⁰ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 66, B-92.
- ⁴¹ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 66, S-13.
- ⁴² Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 71, M-1.
- ⁴³ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 73, S-4.
- ⁴⁴ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 75, B-17.
- ⁴⁵ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 83, S-11.
- ⁴⁶ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 88, M-7.
- ⁴⁷ William E. Hill, *The Oregon Trail, Yesterday and Today* (Caldwell, ID: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1989), xxv
- ⁴⁸ Charles Henry Carey, *History of Oregon*, Vol. I (Chicago: The Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1922), 379.
- ⁴⁹ Leslie M. Scott, "First Taxes in Oregon, 1844." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1930): 3, 4, 5, 6; *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2061051>.
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- ⁵¹ Lottie Gurley, comp. *Genealogical Material in Oregon Provisional Land Claims*, Abstracted; Volumes I-III, 1845-1849 (Portland: The Genealogical Forum of Portland, 1982), Foreword.
- ⁵² Lottie Gurley, comp. *Genealogical Material in Oregon Provisional Land Claims*, 4.
- ⁵³ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. I, p. 173.
- ⁵⁴ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. II, p. 6, B-20.
- ⁵⁵ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. II, P. 11, B-34.
- ⁵⁶ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. II, p. 14, S-16.
- ⁵⁷ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. II, p. 41, S-22.
- ⁵⁸ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. II, p. 45, M-8.
- ⁵⁹ Lottie Gurley, *Genealogical Material in Oregon Donation Land Claims, Vol. II* (Portland, Oregon, Genealogical Forum of Portland, 1959), 25.
- ⁶⁰ U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records; https://glorerecords.blm.gov/details/survey/default.aspx?dm_id=333289&sid=o3gdzizj.xwi&surveyDetailsTabIndex=1.
- ⁶¹ Oregon Donation Land Claim, 2169, Charles Plant, Oregon City Land Office, citing National Archives microfilm publication M815, digital images, *Genealogical Forum of Oregon* (<https://gfo.org/>) > MemberSpace > Digital Collections > Indexed Images > Oregon Donation Land Claims.
- ⁶² Rejected Oregon Donation Land Claim, 962, Jno. B. Durbriel, Oregon City Land Office, citing National Archives microfilm publication M815, digital images, *Genealogical Forum of Oregon* (<https://gfo.org/>) > MemberSpace > Digital Collections > Indexed Images > Rejected Oregon Donation Land Claims.
- ⁶³ *Weekly Oregon Statesman*, 12 Feb 1853.
- ⁶⁴ Munnick, *St. Paul*, Vol. II, p. 58, M-4.
- ⁶⁵ Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest, St. Louis Register, Vol. I (1845 – 1868)* (Portland, Oregon; Binford & Mort, 1982), p. 52, 9-M.
- ⁶⁶ Munnick, *St. Louis*, p. 54, 11-M.
- ⁶⁷ Munnick, *St. Louis*, p. 67, 17-S.
- ⁶⁸ Marion County Deeds, Vol. 2, p. 149-50.
- ⁶⁹ “Douglas, Oregon, United States records,” images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-896K-DS1G?view=fullText> : Nov 16, 2024), image 192 of 971; Douglas County (Oregon). County Clerk. 100153391