Je Me Souviens

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American-French Genealogical Society

Our 26th Year

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AMERICAN-FRENCH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
Post Office Box 830
Woonsocket, Rhode Island 02895-0870

CORRESPONDENCE

Written correspondence should be addressed only to our post office box. The library telephone number for voice and fax is **(401) 765-6141**. An answering machine will take messages when the library is not open. The Society can be reached by E-mail at **AFGS @ afgs.org**. E-mail to the Editor of *JMS* should be addressed to **paul1 @ cox.net**.

MEMBERSHIP

Individual: $32.^{00}$ ($40.^{00}$ Canada); family: $32.^{00}$ ($40.^{00}$ Canada) + $10.^{00}$ ea. addl. member; institutions: $27.^{00}$ ($30.^{00}$ Canada), life: $384.^{00}$ ($480.^{00}$ Canada) Make checks payable to the A.F.G.S. in U.S. funds. *Non-U.S. residents must use postal money orders or credit cards.*

LIBRARY

Our library is located in the basement of the First Universalist Church at 78 Earle Street in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. It is open for research on Mondays from 12 PM to 5 PM, Tuesdays from 1 PM to 9 PM, and every Saturday of each month from 10 AM to 4 PM. The library is closed on all holidays; there are no Saturday sessions in June, July and August.

RESEARCH

The Society does undertake research for a fee. Please see our research policy elsewhere in this issue.

ARTICLES

Original manuscripts are welcomed. Please see our authors' guide elsewhere in this issue.

ADVERTISING

Rates for camera-ready copy are $50 for a full page, $25.00 for a half -page and $12.50 for a quarter-page. The Society assumes no responsibility for the quality of products or performance of services advertised in ***Je Me Souviens***. The Society reserves the right to reject advertisements which it deems inappropriate.

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AFGS Mission Statement

The mission of the American-French Genealogical Society is:

— To collect, preserve and publish genealogical, historical and biographical matter relating to Americans of French and French-Canadian descent.

— To play an active part in the preservation of French-Canadian heritage and culture in the United States.

— To establish and maintain a reference library and research center for the benefit of its members.

— To hold meetings for the instruction of its members.

— To disseminate information of value to its members by way of a regularly published journal and other appropriate means.

— To disseminate genealogical and historical information to the general public, using appropriate means.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Roger Bartholomy, President

In the very near future the United States will be unveiling a new memorial in Washington, DC. Honoring the 16 million men and women who served in the armed forces during World War II, the more than 400,000who died, and the millions who supported the war effort from home. The memorial will be a monument to the spirit, sacrifice, and commitment of the American people to the common defense of the nation and to the broader causes of peace and freedom from tyranny throughout the world. It will inspire future generations of Americans, deepening their appreciation of what the World War II generation accomplished in securing freedom and democracy. Above all, the memorial will stand as an important symbol of American national unity, a timeless reminder of the moral strength and awesome power that can flow when a free people are at once united and bonded together in a common and just cause.

Just as in other cities and towns throughout America, my city of Woonsocket will be organizing a celebration honoring those who served in the effort to stem the tide of tyranny. Plans have been underway for some time now to honor those who fought gallantly and averted communism and helped make the world a better place for everyone to live in. If you are in the area, come and celebrate the "Blackstone Valley Tribute to the Greatest Generation" on May 30, 2004 at the Stadium Theater on Main Street. Check our website for more information.

If your community is planning a ceremony this Memorial Day, please participate and let those who are of the "Greatest Generation" know that you thank and honor each and every one of them for their sacrifices performed during those terrible years. Let us never forget: *All gave some and some gave all.*

Before the Holidays the Society was given a very big gift from a local family. I'm speaking of the A. Raymond Auclair family. Ray, who is a financial advisor and contributing financial writer to our local newspaper, "The Call", has been an avid collector of Rhode Island memorabilia since he was a youngster. During the past thirty years, Ray and his wife, Ann, had accumulated a very large assortment of books, pictures, maps, and broadsides relating to the Blackstone River Valley and Rhode Island History. They decided that the time had come for them to share this wonderful treasure with others and chose the AFGS as the best place to house and safeguard this marvelous historical collection. The collection is

donated in honor of Ray's father, Alphonse Auclair, a retired local policeman, former state senator, past president and co-founder of St. Joseph's Veterans Association and local business man who has made Woonsocket his home for all of his life and has been a very active member of veteran's and civic organizations. Al is a proud former Marine and survivor of Iwo Jima.

Needless to say, our librarian, Jan Burkhart, has been very busy cataloguing this extensive collection preparing it to be placed in our library. Local historian and AFGS member Bob Bellerose has been working with the photos in the collection organizing them for publication as a pictorial history of the Blackstone River Valley. The book will be published by Arcadia Press and the proceeds will be donated to the AFGS to help maintain and preserve the Auclair collection. A very heartfelt "Thank You" to the Auclair family for their generous gift and show of confidence in the leadership and mission of the AFGS.

The issue of what's happening on the Internet concerning the copying and distributing of copyrighted material has hit close to home. Of late we have been made aware by some of our West Coast members that someone had reproduced out Red Drouin CD and selling it on the internet—on E-bay to be specific. We arranged for an out-of-state relative to purchase the CD and forward it to us in the unopened original mailer. We now have the name and address of the unauthorized seller and are currently working with an attorney to take appropriate action.

Reproducing and selling of copyrighted material is a serious crime. It is theft—and in this case it is theft against all members of the AFGS because it is the money we receive as dues and donations from you that enabled us to purchase the rights to the Drouin resources. It was also your money and the time and expertise of our volunteers that produced the CD. We depend on the proceeds from the sale of the Red Drouin CD to support the society and maintain and expand the resources of your library.

George and Theresa Perron, our Building Fund co-chairpersons, have notified us that our fund has surpassed the $100,000 mark, thanks to proceeds from our recent raffle. This is encouraging news, and we thank all of you who have pledged donations through the years and participated in our raffles.

In October, the AFGS Hall of Fame Sub-Committee will be selecting four persons of French-Canadian heritage who have made notable contributions in their field to be inducted in the AFGS French-Canadian Hall of Fame. The Hall of fame was established last year as part of the society's Silver Anniversary commemoration. If you know of someone who deserves to be considered for induction, please forward your nomination along with information on why you feel this person should be considered to Normand Deragon at halloffame@AFGS.org

Our Library Committee has also been very busy re-arranging books and shelving to create more space for newly-arrived resources. One of the more important series to be put on the

shelves recently is the hardbound 64-volume edition of the Female Drouin. This set contains the same marriage information found in the Blue Drouin, but it is organized alphabetically by the bride's name rather than the groom's name. In addition the Board has recently authorized the purchase of a microfilm collection of the marriages of the Province of Ontario. The collection consists of 19 reels of indexes and 246 reels of marriage records. It is expected that the microfilm will be available to you this Spring.

The annual meeting of the AFGS is held on the fourth Tuesday of October. Elections to the Board of Directors are held at the same time. Since most of you are unable to attend the meeting and cast your vote, the Board has decided to send ballots to all AFGS members on September 1st. Candidate statements of persons running for a seat on the Board will be included to help you make your selection. This is your opportunity to determine the leadership of your organization; and we hope you will give your choice thoughtful consideration. Ballots must be postmarked no later than October 1st.

There are fifteen seats on our Board of Directors. Board members serve for a three-year term, and each year five terms expire. Any AFGS member in good standing is eligible to serve on the Board. The position is unpaid and meetings are held the second Saturday of every month. If you would like to be considered to serve on the Board, please send a short biography to Jan Burkhart, chairperson of the Nominating Committee, by July 30, 2004.

We hope that some of you will come and visit us during the summer months. If you plan to stay a few days, contact www.tourblackstone.com/ for more information on events and points of interest in our area. AFGS members may stay at the Holiday Inn Express in Woonsocket at discounted room rates. Call the hotel directly at (401) 769-5000 for more information and to make reservations.

A La Prochaine,

Roger A. Bartholomy
President

LIFE'S TRUTHS

Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day; teach that person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks.

Some people are like Slinkies . . . not really good for anything, but you still can't help but smile when you see one tumble down the stairs.

Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospitals dying of nothing.

Have you noticed since everyone has a camcorder these days no one talks about seeing UFOs like they use to?

Memories

by: Françoise Leveillee

Thursday, December 17, 1981

All right! Mike and Linda's box came one hour ago and I tried not to open it for sixty minutes and then I decided it was pure torture. Here is the "special for Mom" surprise and I am using it this instant. My dear son, you'll never know the emotions that are flooding me right now. My state of mind defies description: unbelievable joy, a feeling that God is in the palm of my hand, a tremendous love for the people I call mine, and a deep gratitude for the many blessings of having my husband and my children. How great art Thou!

Dear Mike, I will try to abide by your wishes...words will flow alright but it will take you years to proofread my writing. I love you so, and there is plenty of room for Linda in my heart.

July 1929 – Coming Home

On this warm summer evening in July 1929, the local train could be seen in the distance, belching its sooty black smoke as it came rounding the curve. It was slowing down considerably now, all the while blowing a long echoless whistle.

At the little red depot near our farmland, a group of saddened neighbors, friends and relatives stood quietly waiting for the lumbering train to screech to a stop. A few boys had climbed on the roof of the low station; everyone hushed. The men stared straight ahead, the women followed the approaching black curtained car with blurred eyes.

As the locomotive ground to a halt, my thirty-nine year old father stepped down from the train, his face ashen, his eyes colorless. Someone brought me to him... I was then two years, nine months old... he lifted me in his arms while his three other children gathered round, peering at his face full of quiet despair. The crowd retreated slightly, wanting to respect this little pool of grief. Then my father turned around to watch the porters unload silently, reverently, a grey velvet covered coffin. One could hear a sob here and there amidst the intermittent blasts of steam from the train engine. No one spoke.

This is, I was told, how my father brought home his beloved young wife, aged thirty, who had died of cancer the previous day. He brought her home to stay but life was never the same for us from then on. From all this I suffered no pain.

1929-1932 – A Happy Refuge

Three miles from our farm lived one of my father's sisters, Ovida, her husband and their four grown up chil-

dren. Like us, they were farmers. After my mother's funeral, these beautiful people brought me to their home, where I was to live for the next three years or so, and gave me enough love to last a lifetime.

I am told I was a tiny, bright and joyous child, somewhat hyperactive at times, and thriving under the attentive care of six affectionate adults.

My favorite game was cutting out catalogues in my quiet playtime, and pushing a doll carriage full of empty bottles when the weather permitted me to play outdoors.

My uncle I remember as a very gentle man. He spanked me lightly only once when I waded into a large mud puddle while wearing brand new shoes. I loved him until he died in his nineties. My aunt was a woman of great dignity, generous, a wonderful cook. My favorite cousin, Gaston, a twenty-year-old young man, would play |with me every evening while laying on the black leather sofa in the kitchen.

Gilberte, the eldest of my cousins, had a boyfriend, a handsome man who courted her regularly. They would sit in the front parlor for hours, as was the custom. Since I |had to remain in the kitchen with my uncle and aunt, I would sneak into the parlor trying to find out what was going on. Of course the boyfriend did not appreciate the interruption to his endearing dialogue... or demonstrations, so he would pretend to pull a knife out of his pocket so as to "cut my ears off." That would make me scamper back to the kitchen to the merry laughter of my uncle and aunt.

Come to think of it, I never liked Arthur, even after my cousin married him.

1932 – Let Her Be

When I was a child the train seems to have been the hub of our society, our main means of contact with the rest of the world. On this February evening, once again a small crowd awaited the arrival of the faithful locomotive, but this time it was not in sadness. My father had married in Montréal and he was bringing his bride home.

Antoinette PICARD was in her early forties, attractive, well dressed, childish, and a stranger to all of us including my father! Above all the lady was beautifully unsuited to be a farmer's wife. My grandparents (on my mother's side) had recommended this "deal," and since my father was a very lonely man, at times even desperate, he consented to this doomed (dumb) match.

One must consider these were the "Depression Years," poverty was as steady as the rising sun. My father had five young children by his first wife and Antoinette was "an old maid," an American. She was uneducated, bored with her life, accustomed to good wages and a life of reasonable comfort.

The union lasted less than six months. It was a disaster for us children, a painful experience for Antoinette, if not a nightmare, and a bitter tragedy for my father. He was left lonelier than ever, unable to remarry according to the laws of our Church's province, and probably worst of all deeply humiliated.

The afternoon Antoinette left a

taxi picked her up and her many suitcases. She sent us to the neighbor's from where we would await (René and I), the return of father from the fields. This was late in August and as dusk invaded our flat land, René and I spotted our father walking home with his three horses. The animal's hooves raised a low cloud of dust even as a few drops of rain were beginning to spatter the gravel road.

We ran to Papa to announce the departure of our stepmother. He kept looking straight ahead, his tired feet slightly dragging, without a comment except these few words: "Let her be." The following evening the phone rang. It was my grandmother from Montréal calling my father to tell him that Antoinette wanted to come back. Dad answered curtly that she had found a way to leave so she could find her way back. Except for an occasional joke among his friends. Dad never mentioned her name again.

I met Antoinette briefly in 1939 in Canada, then again in 1949 here in West Warwick. She was pleasant, happily married and almost mute on that episode other life. I have visited her several times over the years, she is now 91 years old, (January 1, 1982), still well preserved, concerned solely about herself as in the past.

I have no feelings for Antoinette except maybe an impatient kind of pity. Down deep I might not have allowed myself to develop a friendship for her so as not to betray my father's love for me. As of today she never mentioned his name.

Interior of the church, July 2000

P.S. Antoinette gave me her wedding band, the one Father had given her. I believe Cathy has it now. Antoinette is still living, (Jan. 1983), she turned 91 years old last November. I visited her a few days ago. She has little to say, she says she is tired of living.

1932-1935 – The Rectory

When my mother died I had gone to live with my aunt and uncle and I remained there until father remarried. We had then all returned home to father, finally reunited. This homecoming lasted but a few months for me. No sooner had my stepmother disappeared from my life, I was off again for a few years, but this time it was a more foreign arrangement.

My father had three brothers, the youngest being a secular priest and at that time pastor of the St-Gerard d'Yamaska parish. This is located some thirty miles from our farm. The rectory where my *oncle* Donat dwelt was to become my home for the next few years.

You talk about cultural shock, this must have been it for me! I don't remember my arrival there nor the early weeks of my peculiar sojourn. The rectory was a large house, more comfortable than our farmhouse and quite luxuriously furnished in comparison to our neglected motherless home. My uncle was an ascetic man given to mild depression and much vanity, but of a generous nature.

At the rectory my daily physical care was assigned to the housekeeper. Madame VERVILLE was a tall, thin, white haired woman who was kind and quite patient with me but who also was overburdened with work. The rectory was a huge place to keep neat and what of the cooking, the many visiting priests and relatives, and the church linen which had to be laundered and starched so stiffly! Just the communion rail cloth required several hours to iron, wax and pleat! Now this elderly lady had the added burden of taking care of a six year old child!

Life for me became a very regimented set of circumstances. I had to rise at 6 a.m. every morning, brush my teeth with soap, attend early daily mass, return to the rectory and set the breakfast table. Later on this was to be a set time to "review my lessons."

My uncle always took some kind of medicine before meals, likely a tonic, so that was the first rite. Then followed the sign of the cross. Next we shared an apple because it was supposedly good for "our" bowels. I swear to this day that's the reason for a chronic constipation that afflicted me the rest of my life! Whatever else we ate was of no consequence because I can't remember a single item! In fairness, I must stress that we ate well always.

I attended the local public school, the only one, across the street, but I certainly was not a remarkable student. I believe I was not at all neat in my class work and I definitely stayed for detention a few times. I wish I could remember for what offenses, it might lend me character. This school experience, in the little village is just about a blank in my memory.

I believe my uncle loved me and that I feared him. He was very strict but also attentive. If I were to express my gratitude for some happy moments in

my life with him, it would have to be, without a doubt for the fact that he let me handle, took and read or play with any book, anytime, from his quite extensive home library. The bottom shelf held a large volume on the lives of saints, and I was fascinated by the pictures it held. The text is an absolute blank.

Uncle Donat introduced me to the sacrament of Penance which I received for the first time sitting on his knees in his office. He welcomed me to the sacrament of Eucharist daily, taught me some prayers, and above all tried to instill in me the virtue of truth. That does not come so easy but the incentive was strong on my part: he would hear my confession regularly. What a way to bring the loving gentle God of my now life to a puzzled and fearful child who saw nothing but obedience and a need for acceptance so as to avoid increased stiff discipline.

Cathy told me once that in spite of such a traumatic early life, I am an incredibly stable person. These words have helped to preserve my sanity as I relive my childhood. Of course my husband is the anchor in my life, I admit this gladly.

Sundays At the Rectory (written 1982)

Sundays I dreaded the most. After High Mass, while *Oncle* Donat received many of his parishioners in his office. I had to sit in the kitchen and write a "resume" of his sermon. (I was seven years old). My uncle felt more or less choleric and exhausted on this day because of the long fasting he was obliged to submit to, and the multiple problems his people brought to him after the service. You can imagine when he came to read my misspelled paper, which consisted mostly of You said...You said...You said... plus whatever I had grasped, he had little patience for my literary rendition of his sermon. Believe me, my love of writing did not begin there, but who knows, the discipline of it may have.

Sunday dinner was always special because of the excellent cuisine, but shortly after it was time for my uncle to take a well deserved nap.

What is a little girl to do on a nice summer Sunday afternoon, far removed from her home, her beloved father, her brothers and sister, but sit on the front steps and cry of loneliness. Unfortunately my uncle discovered me one Sunday as I was feeling sorry for myself and right then and there he delivered his second sermon of the day. The theme was my ingratitude and my lack of awareness on how well off I was.

This incident sticks in my memory as one of the most painful experiences of my life. I do not hold it against my uncle, I believe then and today that he loved me deeply. He simply did not know how to be a whole family! How could he?

1932 – Christmas with Uncle Donat

My earliest memory of Christmas dates from December 1932 at the rectory. This was the year *Oncle* Donat decided to stage a real pageant for the Midnight Mass. Several children from the village were enrolled in the program and as uncle was very proud of me or of his good deed in taking care of me, I prefer to believe the former, I was to be fea-

tured in this admirable endeavor.

The seamstress had made me a white satin dress adorned with a simple blue sash for the solemn occasion. Some girls, clothed as angels stood on special staging above the crib and "*la petite Françoise,*" round faced, tiny, big eyes, and short haired was duly planted somewhat in front of the Creche.

At a signal I was to announce with a song a small parade of shepherds coming from the rear of the church and on their way to adore the Holy Infant in full view of the whole congregation. The music began softly, the shepherds advanced, and I... froze permanently. Instead of belting my song, which I could do quite well: "*Berger, berger, vois-tu la bas?* (Shepherd, shepherd can you see in the distance?)" some mechanism in my brain refused to cooperate, and all I could do was bray pitifully: "Be, be, be, be..." until one of the angels mercifully came to my rescue by joining in with the first few words. After that I carried on unfalteringly.

My children think this is quite hilarious but my uncle was cross for a short while and I was seriously distressed. However after the Midnight Mass I returned to the rectory with my uncle to find at the end of the softly lit hall a pretty Christmas tree and at the base of it a beautiful doll dressed in pink satin standing in its open box. I am sure my uncle had gone to a considerable amount of trouble to bring this into my life. Sadly enough I cannot remember my emotions or feelings at the time except that uncle was very tired by then. I cuddled the beautiful doll for a moment and quietly climbed the stairs to my small bed in Madame VERVILLE's room.

This may not sound like a joyous event but I am sure that it was. Given my spontaneous nature I must have been happy somehow. Certainly it was a remarkable enough occasion for me to remember vividly to this day.

This is the first Christmas I can recall, cheerful enough but without my family. Now you know why I am such a fanatic about celebrating this December holiday. Since the birth of my first child it has been a time of sacred joy never to be compromised.

The Parish Visit

The parish visit was a continuous process with my uncle Donat. He was a dedicated priest, a mighty authority, and he knew every member of the one hundred or so families who inhabited his pastoral territory. Of course uncle made me a part of the ritual. Today I can look back on this with respect and love for my uncle for including me in a truly rich and unique experience.

The families in the village we visited by walking to their homes. We did not stay merely a few moments in each house, we spent an entire evening. Dinner was never on the agenda, but we happily joined, at least I did, in card games, popcorn eating, taffy making, etc., which were regular activities on long winter evenings. Because of my uncle's position, I would say I received much attention from the hostess while uncle quietly listened to the particular problems he was forcibly involved in discussing with the master of the house. These were humble decent people, of limited education but with a great deal

of endurance.

Where there was a sick one, usually an elderly person, my uncle was received with obvious reverence and I was expected to approach the invalid and offer some kind of gracious and candid gesture. Maybe my nursing instinct began there. Surely compassion should have entered my subconscious mind.

I remember one particular lady who kissed my uncle's hands, weeping silently as she repeatedly assured him that he had just performed a miracle. Heavy stuff for a bewildered child! Today I understand that this pastoral visit was simply a whiff of fresh air temporarily lifting the fog of this poor lady's loneliness.

When the visit extended beyond our walking limit we traveled by car in the summer and by sled in the winter. I would estimate that we never covered more than four miles one way, but in the snow and cold blustery weather of Canada it was far enough.

When we went out on winter nights, it was on cold starry evenings but occasionally it would be mild and snowing. I dearly remember the chestnut mare Climen, bred with pride on my father's farm, trotting steadily, displaying all her grace. The brass bells attached to the *travails* of our sled would jingle pleasantly with the constant movement of the horse.

We were warmly bundled. Uncle and I, our knees covered with a brown buffalo robe lined with green wool. With one hand this country priest would hold the reins, with the other a cigar on which he puffed contentedly. I remember the pungent aroma and the little puffs of smoke rising with his frosty breath above his fur hat. I suppose I just sat there chatting.

Uncle Donat lived more comfortably than most of his parishioners, but he helped the needy families generously. In summertime he would even drive the very sick to the hospital himself. Cars weren't numerous in the middle thirties in our remote comer of the world. I imagine Uncle's duties required him to own such a vehicle and besides using it for his own pleasure he often came to the rescue of family, friends and parishioners.

On "our" parish visit, always we were greeted as important visitors, always I was included in the effusive greetings, always I shall cherish these memories.

A Time to Work

As a resident of the rectory I had to perform certain duties. My uncle proceeded rightfully to teach me how one must cultivate a sense of responsibility. (I haven't stopped since)! I was assigned regular chores to be done at certain times on certain days.

Aside from attending mass and school daily I had to recite my lessons while I dried the evening dishes for Mme. VERVILLE. She would listen patiently and correct me when necessary. I detected no pleasure nor annoyance on her face but this ritual must not have been a delight for her.

I was given a bath weekly but I washed and dressed myself every morning. I remember a blue skirt and a dark

red sweater, which I seem to have worn perpetually. It was also my prerogative to sport a grey wool coat with matching leggings and a white beret, which sat on my head three seasons of the year.

One item in my humble and limited wardrobe sticks out in my mind. Uncle had bought me a sumptuous velvet hat, bonnet style, of a rich wine color and trimmed with ribbons of the same hue. He had bought it at Shooner's, a general store in Pierreville where we went often enough. Feeling that it might have been a luxury, Uncle had sternly warned me not to mention the price. Because of this memorable detail, I clearly remember and I shall now unveil the secret. Three dollars and fifty cents must have been a frivolous sum for a little girl's hat in 1936!

After school I sometimes fed the rabbits and chickens my uncle raised. He also owned a horse, which was an absolute necessity in winter, two cows, and some pigs. One might wonder why the menagerie, but it was perfectly logical for a country priest whose church and rectory were established more or less on farmland. The parishioners, 95 of them were farmers, would pay their tithe mostly in grains, money being so scarce, and aside from selling a large amount of it for the upkeep of the rectory and church. Uncle would raise meat and even plant a large garden every year. The caretaker, sacristan, did the work for modest wages and Uncle and I contributed some of our minor services.

Dusting in the rectory was a standard, helping Mme.VERVILLE with bed changing, errands, etc. were regular assignments, but working in the church was definitely a mixture of pain and pleasure.

It was my fortune to sweep each step of the two stairways leading to the choir Ion, plus the space beneath each pew. I can't recall ever completing the job!

During the summer and early fall, kind people donated all kinds of flowers from their gardens and I would help, arranging them in vases. They looked grand on the tall white altar! But come the middle of the week, my elevated status now consisted of discarding the wilted flowers and washing every smelly vase holding rotted stems. Well, so much for God's glory!

In the evening, after darkness had settled on the quiet little village. Uncle would return to the church to lock up. In winter, he would feed stubby logs of hard wood to the huge furnace in the cellar, these would slowly burn all night and keep the sacristy warm for the weekly daily mass which would be offered there. The church proper would only be used on Sunday.

While Uncle tended to the fire, he would let me spread his liturgical vestments for the next morning service. There was a card affixed to the wall above the large bureau-like closet and from it I would determine the color of the vestments to be used for the ordinary of the next day's mass. It would be green, white, violet or red. Gold and black were only for special events. I never touched the sacred vessels. When the harsh winter would blow us a heavy storm, no one attended mass so I had the extraordinary duty of serving as an altar boy. I can't recall any particular

emotion concerning this occasional privilege.

When the evening chores were completed, Uncle would kneel in the first pew of the little church and he would meditate for awhile. For me, sitting somewhere back of the nave, the immobile shape of this father-priest bent in prayers, the occasional creek of the structure, the enveloping darkness, save for the eternal glow of the sanctuary lamp, these had to be eerie, stupendous moments.

What I remember clearly is that it felt good back in the warm office – living room of my uncle. He would sit in his rocker and listen to his radio while smoking a pipe. I would perch at his golden oak desk and play with his pad, pen, blotter, etc., all the while producing different kinds of masterful nothings. It was not always so, but these moments were the happy hours.

Uncle had me take piano lessons for a few weeks but for unknown reasons to me, these were abandoned shortly. I cringe at the thought that it might have been because of my lack of enthusiasm, but it could have been. Given the fact that I was geared to such a disciplined life, I might have gained a lifetime of enjoyment from learning how to play music.

He himself would enjoy playing and now and then he would make me sing to his uncertain accompaniment. He even wrote a song which he taught me. I remember the tune but very little of the lyrics. It had to do with a child whose cradle had been shadowed by tragedy, "*...quand le deuil couvrit mon berceau.*"

So I grew in body and spirit, under the tutelage of this formidable figure of authority but also amidst the laughter that would erupt form the playful times of my life a the rectory. For like in Ecclesiastes, there was a time to be sad and a time to be happy, a time to cry and a time to laugh, a time to work and a time to play.

A Time to Play

Laughter was not a sound commonly heard at the rectory. Madame VERVILLE looked ever harried because of the unreasonable amount of work expected of her. As for Uncle Donat, anchored deeply in the Jansenism of his seminary days, he did not laugh spontaneously.

I suspect that during uncle's priesthood training he had allowed a vague sense of guilt to settle on his soul for everything that might have appeared frivolous. I watched him refuse communion to a very decent young woman once because she was wearing bright red lipstick. This from a truly devoted priest!

When I first established residence at the rectory, I tried to continue for a while my practice of expecting adults to play with me, as my cousins had done. On the spur of the moment when Uncle happened to stand somewhere, I would grab the bottom of his long black cassock and spin a merry-go-round, which entangled him and forced him to follow. I was six at the time. Those were rare moments when I remember hearing his laughter.

In time I found some friends in the little country village. Two girls who lived across the street from us possessed the

most extensive collection of paper dolls I had ever seen. Their older sister worked in Montréal and would frequently send them new ones. I enjoyed "playing house and school" with all these paper characters.

In Uncle's outer office, the one where he received his parishioners for business purposes, stood a magnificent roll-top desk. It held dozens of compartments, slots and drawers which never failed to hold my interest. On the writing surface area. Uncle kept a stapler, a large hole-puncher, and best of all, an old typewriter. There I spent countless busy hours inventing numerous solitary games. How can I account for the fact that to this day I cannot type? Obviously, all these activities remained a game for me and I never bothered, to my regret, to tackle the discipline of learning to type properly.

I played often in the snow. Canada is winter. I ran all over the church's grounds playing hide-and-seek, among the many trees. I entertained my doll on the church's steps on summer days, and best of all Uncle let me "play" the organ in the deserted church occasionally. Those must have been lofty moments in my make-believe, solitary world.

Two sets of circumstances, truly happy times, I hold dear. One in the immense privilege my uncle would grant me by letting me ring the single, large, deep-tone church bell. When it was time for the Angelus at noon and at six p.m., I would hang onto the rope and rise and fall with the same uncontrollable glee as the Hunchback of Notre Dame. This unique thrill should have carried me to forgive Uncle's excessive severity.

The other is, to Mme. VERVILLE's despair, that Uncle decided to obtain a dog. It was somewhat like Hiram in appearance. He proceeded to train it... and me.

First the local blacksmith constructed a harness for the dog and fitted my sled so that the dog could be hitched to it. I well remember the dog pulling the sled, me sitting perilously on the narrow vehicle, holding on for dear life so as not to tip over, and Uncle holding the dog's leash and running in the snow. Of all the memories of my life at The Rectory, these winter excursions through the tiny village would have to be among those I most cherish.

So, there was a time to play as there is now a time to remember. Possibly for the first time in my life I begin to understand and appreciate my uncle's concern, his tremendous generosity on my behalf. His birthday falls on December first, to this day I have not forgotten to note it, if only in spirit.

Our Social Life

The parish visit was by all means a pastoral duty for my uncle the priest, but he did entertain visitors socially and not infrequently. Neighboring priests would appear regularly, some friend's of Uncle came occasionally to share dinner with us, and relatives dropped in often enough. For my uncle the most sensational entertainment of all would be on the occasion of the bishop's visit, he would stay overnight, once every three years. For me there was only one visitor that mattered.

Once during each winter my beloved father would come to visit for two

days. He would leave the farm's chores to my two brothers age eleven and seven or so, and ride the many miles by horse and sled on the snow-covered roads. It was not easy for two young boys to feed the animals, milk the cows, tend the fires in the house so as to keep warm, and cook their own meals.

Father would choose a good weekend when the weather was not excessively cold for the long ride. Hot bricks wrapped in cloth and placed at the bottom of the sled would keep his feet warm. Tucked somewhere under the seat, there would usually be a large container filled with heavy cream, some pieces of the best meat from the farm's larder and a jug of maple syrup. Those were Dad's standard offerings to the relatives who "kept" my brother René, Aunt Florida, and to Uncle Donat with whom I lived.

Try to imagine my anxiety on this interminable day until I would spot Dad's horse trotting down the long driveway leading to the church and rectory. I can still picture the white frost around the mare's dark nostrils. As soon as Dad would see me at the window he would smile and wave. I cannot remember my exact feelings at that particular moment but as I write these lines my heart aches slightly at the image of his literally golden smile, he had several gold-capped teeth, and somewhat sad eyes would appear at the kitchen door.

Was there hugging and kissing? I don't know. But what a delight it was when father would hand me a paper bag full of penny candy! This was an unforgettable treat indeed since I still enjoy the thought of it.

Strangely enough I cannot remember what we did while Dad was visiting, nor the moment of his departure. That the separation left not a trace of pain had to be a tribute to my uncle who stood by me then and many more times in my life.

The Bishop Is Coming!

If there was a time of commotion, if not of confusion, it was the few days immediately preceding the bishops visit. Confirmation was administered every three years by this high man of the hierarchy of the diocese of Nicolet. The children who were to receive this holy sacrament ranged in age from seven to ten. Whether it was very beneficial to the young recipients of these gifts of graces is debatable, but who am I to question the designs of the Lord and the Bishop of Nicolet?

Madame VERVILLE had at least three helpers for this great event. All the rooms had to be readied for the bishop; he slept over, as well as all of the priests who accompanied him. The meals had to be planned and prepared and the grounds would have to be decorated to better honor the almost royal visitor.

There would be dozens of green poles, four feet tall or so, planted at regular intervals along the village's single street all the way to the steps of the church. On the tip of these poles small flags waved. The large expanse of lawn had to be trimmed neatly and the hedges were tailored carefully.

Once the August visitor had arrived, greeted the modest crowd, and held the short office of the Blessed Sacrament in the church, he and all the

priests would repair to the rectory for a cigar, a glass of wine and lively conversation. The official ceremony at the church would take place the following morning.

I am sure the visit included business dealings but I did not witness these procedures. The famous "state dinner" would take place this same evening.

The first floor of the rectory consisted mainly of six large rooms. The kitchen held, among other necessities, a magnificent black wood stove trimmed with lots of shining chrome. The room was very spacious and had in addition a generous size pantry. It always smelled nice in there.

From the kitchen a swinging oak door led directly into a large dining room where one would see a very long table that could sit at least twenty guests, several dark chairs, tall French windows and two oak cupboards where all the china and silverware were stored. The utensils had cool creamy ivory handles which I liked to touch, but the most special item there had to be the butter dish.

It was made of shiny silver and when one lifted the dome cover one saw a heavy glass plate on which the butter would rest and underneath this glass plate, the dish held pieces of ice so as to keep the butter firm. That was special, and I was allowed to carry it.

From the dining room one could walk into the small office by turning left. If one would walk straight from the kitchen through the dining room there was the hall with the bathroom on the left and Uncle's bedroom on the right. Further down the hall there was a formal small parlor on the right and on the left a long carpeted stairway leading to the second floor. At the foot of the stairs a doorway opened to my uncle's large office. The hall terminated with double doors that would open on the front porch.

Uncle's office held lovely things. Besides all the books, there was a huge dark piano, and a small table with a marble top. On this table stood an alabaster fruit bowl. Aside from being on a pedestal, this bowl was remarkable because there were four alabaster birds perched on its edges. Near Uncle's rocker of course the large floor radio often played softly.

But, coming back to our famous visitor, it was quite a sight to see a bishop with his black cassock and scarlet cummerbund stand at the long table as all the guest priests would file in. Uncle, I am sure, was a gracious host and the food must have been good. Wine was served from the regular supply purchased for liturgical purposes. There was nothing improper about that since it was of good quality and had not yet been consecrated at mass.

Uncle must have been proud of me at this particular feast because he insisted that I carry one platter to the table. As I handed him the large dish he commanded that I sing the song he had especially written for me. Without hesitation I rendered the melody with splendid candor and very modest talent.

The bishop, Monseigneur Bruno even held me on his knees later in the evening as we looked at a book together.

He had a kind pink face and lovely white hair. Of the pomp and circumstances in church I remember none. Either it was not memorable enough, or too sophisticated for me to grasp, or I was simply too young. After these years of unusual attention one must wonder what happened to *"la petite Françoise," Monsieur le Cure's* niece?

Well, another displacement. A great many events would add to the colorful quilt of my yet very young life. I was now returning to the farm, home to my father, my sister my brothers, to freedom, but also to a somewhat desolate situation.

1936-1939 – (9-12 yrs. old)

It is difficult for me to recall the farm and the countryside where I was born without a mixture of love, pride, and sadness. Memories tumble so chaotically that I shall not attempt to date events. Life for the next three years ran its inexorable course (letting the chips fall where they may. Hardship was our daily fare but so was laughter.

Returning "home" required another period of adjustments, but it seems that I could cope well in the midst of this constant shuffling of circumstances, that had been my lot. Fate would keep propelling me into situations that left me sometimes bewildered but never discouraged. Resiliency was my heritage and it has been nurtured through the years by a great deal of unexpected happenings, and yes, a certain primitive courage on my part.

The die had been cast when I was a toddler and I would keep on settling down only to be uprooted again. When Cathy sent me a card in 1981 and on it, it said,"Mother, home is where you are," I knew without a doubt I had completed the circle. I have firmly established my own warm traditions

In 1936 our life was difficult for most everyone in our locality. The "Depression" was affecting the rich and the poor in various degrees, but no one was exempt from this economical crisis. Among the farmers where I lived nobody's brother could "spare a dime." My father struggled to keep his land, which he did even without the support of a spouse. Survive he did, often with sadness, rarely with patience, never with good grace, almost always with fortitude. He couldn't give up with five children to feed.

We had food, we grew it, we produced our own. Milk and butter and cheese were readily available, we had meat all winter, we raised and butchered our own. We had heat, we lumbered and chopped our wood supply, we had wool, we raised our own sheep.

We were not dressed adequately because my fifteen year-old sister did not know how to sew and knit. She cooked as best she could, in spurts, to pacify our hunger and quite by accident to stimulate our growth.

Our house was lovely, but grossly neglected because father had little interest in it and my sister was but a child playing housekeeper. Philippe, the eldest, was away pursuing his studies, therefore depriving my harried father of precious help. Florian, René and I attended the local elementary one-room school faithfully but no one paid much

attention to our progress, success or failure.

Father went out often enough in the evening to visit friends and my sister, though only fifteen already had boyfriends who would captivate the largest part of her heart and mind.

There was always much work to be done, never enough money, no holiday celebrations, not many family gatherings. Our aunts invited us frequently and my father was happy to share their home and cooking for a few hours. My aunts, his sisters, were beautiful people in that way.

Even when Dad felt discouraged he would manage to convey his love to us. At least I remember him that way. How he would feast on wild strawberries! I can still see the laughter in his grey eyes as he would break chunks of bread in a large bowl, throw in handfuls off strawberries and then pour as much milk over it all.

There wasn't much sickness in our home, rarely did we require medical attention. No fractures, no eyeglasses, no surgery. Sadly though, no dental care. If we became victims of tooth decay we had to visit our family doctor in the village. There we were truly victims. He, the doctor, a large man with a white beard would sit the unfortunate child on a straight kitchen chair and simply pull the aching tooth out. I remember holding on to the chair in terror and afterward spitting out blood while the fear and pain caused by the brutal extraction would slowly subside. This form of torture was certainly the "pits" of my childhood. Neglected, not poor, we were, but I don't remember being aware of it then. Being motherless was a daily plague I guess.

Among my siblings I seem to have been quite fortunate because every summer for the next four years I would spend at least three weeks in Montréal visiting our relatives while my father, brothers, and sister slaved at the hardest labor of the year, harvesting.

My trip to the big city was quite an adventure because I would have to ride with a friend of my godfather's and because this man had to be in Montréal at 7a.m. On Monday we had to start at 4 a.m. from St.-Guillaume. It took about three hours to cover the distance of 60 miles by car. Crossing the Jacques Cartier Bridge into the busy metropolis was an awesome adventure for me I am sure. My godfather would pick me up at his friend's business place downtown and he would drop me at another relative's home for a few days before taking me to his summer residence on Friday afternoon.

First I spent some time with Aunt Marie-Ange who owned and ran a dry goods store. She lived in the same building. Aunt Marie-Ange was large, pretty, generous, a good cook and she laughed a lot. She would sew clothes for me and made me feel a little pretty. I am still fond of her. She was married to Uncle Gilles, my mother's brother.

From the dry goods store I could walk, ten minutes, to my grandparent's home. Strangely enough I do not remember the names of the streets.

My mother's father, Onezime

GRAVEL, was a short, round old man, with a round face, round eyes and a round baldhead. He ran a small convenience grocery store in the front room of his residence. The greatest privilege he accorded me was to let me sell penny candy and ice cream cones. Grandfather was very close to his pennies, and helping myself to the "goodies" was a rare occasion.

Grandmother, a tall robust woman with greying red hair would let me follow her through the house and store and talk to me with great patience about my beloved mother. I must have asked a thousand questions about my unknown beautiful mother and surely she answered them all. Aunt Lucille, the youngest daughter was still living at home, being unmarried. She and her boyfriend would take me out riding in the evening sometimes.

The next stop was at Aunt Dorilla's, my mother's oldest sister, a handsome woman who loved to play the role of grande dame. Her husband was a "native" of the big city, a councilman and businessman. Food was Uncle Amedé's overwhelming love, he weighed over three hundred pounds, and politics his all-consuming interest. He was a boisterous, generous, sophisticated, and willful man, all at the same time.

I liked my stay at Aunt Dorilla's because I got to eat "real steak," look at my cousin's beautiful dresses, and read, and read, and read way into the night because nobody told me I had to go to sleep. Aunt Dorilla did not get up much before noon and I could integrate into her lifestyle that way. Of her three children one became very dear to me. I shall speak of him later.

Finally, my godfather, who owned and ran a prosperous tavern, among other things, right across the Forum on rue Ste-Catherine, would pick me up in his limousine and we would drive to Plage Laval, 25 miles out of Montréal, where his wife and children spent the warm season. It was not like Newport but it was nice. What I looked like, how I dressed, I do not recall. One detail I remember because the memory hurt until I was in my forties. As uncle was talking with other relatives he laughingly remarked that I was the least good-looking of the family. Whether it was true or not did not matter, but the fact that I believed him for the following four decades was at times painful.

Uncle Albert MARTIN was a wealthy man and a very astute businessman. He was married to my mother's sister. Aunt Marie-Louise, my godmother, was nearly homely, highly intelligent, kind, and a genuine miser. My godparent's summer home was nice, well furnished, with lots of flowers, a good expanse of lawn and situated a few hundred yards from the lake. In time other of my relatives from Montréal purchased summer residences in the same neighborhood.

For the older people, the evenings would be spent playing croquet where the games were serious and probably held for modest stakes. My two cousins, older than myself, were tennis players, excellent ones, and were involved in tournaments. Afternoons were for swimming. I just waded in I guess, and mornings were for house chores. My cousin Jeannine was somewhat spoiled

but always nice to me. She graciously took me everywhere she went. Aunt Marie-Louise welcomed me her home many times, always with warmth.

Time would fly in such easy surroundings. I'm sure I enjoyed this life of luxury, but when I would return to the farm, with a box of new clothes bought for me or sewn by my relatives, it was a joy to find my family again.

The reunion was a joyous one except for the sight of my father. He was so emaciated and burned from the exhausting labor in the field that even his eyes could not produce the smile I had come to appreciate.

To my beloved sister and brothers, I must have been the spoiled brat coming home until next time. I hope I brought some stories and laughter to brighten their harsh life.

What Else? (Written in 1983)

There must be some truth to the saying that no one teaches anyone anything but what one wants to know. Yet learning is not that simple. I believe that we must be provided with opportunities to find out what we want to know.

I can say that between 1936-1939 my own learning lacked goal and inspiration. At home we barely survived, but we did, mostly by our own initiative. At school we were taught the three R's by poorly educated teachers, and certainly there weren't any highly educational discussions at our house. There weren't any public libraries available, theater was not even a dream, and no one mentioned learning music. I kept reading the same children's magazines brought back from my summer vacation in Montréal. We played cards on occasion, invented our own games and toys, played with our neighbors once in awhile, and skated a lot on the frozen fields in winter.

We, my brother René and I, attended Sunday mass only occasionally because space was limited in the "carriage" or sled. When we did attend mass, it left me without emotions except that if the weather was rainy or extremely cold it was a painful experience. I do not remember praying with the rest of my family during those almost barren years. We learned about sex vaguely from observing the animals, surely we never talked about it.

Some visitors came to our house, mostly male friends of my father and sister. Dad was a good storyteller and the young men of our neighborhood enjoyed his company. My sister, being very attractive and charming had many beaux, usually the most eligible bachelors in the surrounding communities.

During the winter Dad had to lumber the wood supply for the following year. He would come home after dark, cold and hungry, wearing his old fur coat, rabbit I believe, fix himself a *"ponce"* (white whiskey, hot water and sugar) and hurried to join my brothers in the caring of the animals in the barn. I helped many times. Feeding the horses, slicing turnips for the cows, and even cleaning the barn of manure. We had pigs, sheep, chickens, etc., and in winter they were all kept inside so the chores never ended.

Some mornings René and I would get up very early, 5:30, and hurry to do

the chores in the barn just to surprise my father. I'll always remember his tender smile as he walked in to observe our delight. Hurry we did because Dad had the habit of ordering us around with the light remark, *"Cours, mon p'tit chien, cours"* (Run my little puppy, run).

All kinds of little animals were born late winter and early spring. The most wondrous event was the arrival of a new colt. It was quite infrequent, and of all the newborn, it seemed the most vulnerable with its large head, small body and foolish skinny legs. As it tried repeatedly to stand the legs would tremble and collapse while the head stayed low. The mother kept nudging the colt until it half rose and came to be near the mare for nursing. As it gained strength we enjoyed playing with the colt or watching it run outside by its mother, always keeping pace.

We had a dog, we always had a dog as part of the household and my brother René loved it dearly. Cats were a necessity to keep the mouse population down.

Father owned nice cattle, many of them registered stock which he enjoyed showing at the county fair. We had a cow called St-Sulpice; it came as a calf from the Trappist farm of Oka. This animal took in many blue ribbons and championships.

Dad also owned a four-star blue blood bull that brought a few near tragedies before the final occurrence. Restraining a two thousand-pound beast is hard enough, but trying to cut its immense and powerful horns is a deadly matter.

One New Year's Eve, because the bull was trying to rip its stall apart. Dad decided to chain the near enraged animal with the help of a neighbor, and proceeded to saw one of its horns while my brother held a lantern. In the middle of this bloody procedure, the mighty bull surged suddenly in an attempt to free itself, nearly crushing Dad and tightening the chains so fiercely that the poor beast strangled. The sheer weight prevented the men from loosening the chains and as the bull was dying quickly. Dad had to bleed it to salvage the meat.

And so. Father's magnificent prize-winning bull's life ended. It was a devastating event. All night long my father labored at butchering and freezing hundreds of pounds of meat in the below zero temperature.

What I recalled most vividly is the spectacle of our beloved horse Jess pulling this one ton carcass out of the barn. There she was, courageous and steady, on her bleeding knees, never giving up on her load until it lay on the frozen ground outside. What a desolate scene. Surely that night of long ago was a nightmare. I can see the blood splattered clothes, my bother's shaken stance and my prostrate father. But the Lord was merciful, no one was hurt and we had lots of meat to give away.

Jess

Once upon a time there was a horse called Jess...So begins a tale of long ago, but I must restrict myself to writing a simple little story because the memories are few, besides, recalling Jess may involve more emotion than authenticity.

Dad had bought Jess when she was a three year-old filly. She came of good dependable stock, in full health, with four strong legs, a reddish-brown coat and some white on her forehead.

For the following twenty-four years Jess would give us frisky, beautiful colts, excelled at training young recalcitrant horses and probably should be credited with some of our safety. Certainly she delighted my young life. Jess was very gentle, absolutely calm, somewhat lazy, but magnificently loyal. She was incapable of viciousness, even when pushed around brusquely or pulling a load into tight spaces and narrow gateways. She was even heroic at pulling heavy loads, using her great strength steadily, patiently, until the chore was completed.

She could even push the gate open on her way to pasture. Jess let us ride bareback anytime, if you could catch her in the meadows. When hitched to a wagon, she could wait endlessly in any kind of weather without being tied to a post. I talked to her, laid down on her back while she was feeding on fresh hay in her stall, warmed my hands on her warm flank and touched my face to her nose. We could run under her belly, between her back legs and she would never make a startled move.

Because of her even, calm temper she never would shy away from flying objects such as paper, rags, etc. Jess was just about human.

When she reached the respectable old age of twenty-seven, worn out and somewhat crippled with arthritis. Dad decided that it would be merciful to have her put away. One morning "the man" came for her. She followed him meekly on her stiff legs, showing the deep curve of her old back, which had carried us so docilely and patiently. My father cried and so did I. Jess will always be a warm, safe and enchanting memory.

Noël et Jour de l'An (1936-1938)

The New Year is really the only holiday celebration I recall during those years. We – Florian, René and I were so excited at the prospect of setting our inverted plate carefully labeled with our name on the dining room table. Underneath the plate we would deposit our carefully written letter for our father to find. I believe it was then the traditional way to offer our vows and resolutions for good behavior.

René and I could scarcely sleep that New Year's Eve in anticipation of the goodies we would discover in the morning.

There it all lay before our eyes as we came slowly, as if to make the moment last forever, down the curved stairways, holding on to the smooth, red, mahogany banister. Oh what delight to behold! A nice orange for each one a full bottle (10 oz.) of strawberry soda sparkling near each plate, cookies, candies, etc. But the most wondrous sight of all were the animals made of barley candy. There they stood in the soft glow of the kerosene lamp as we stood in the shadow of this winter dawn. One could find many kinds of animals but the lion was the most spectacular, five inches tall, crystal clear, and sparkling red. I also remember the little amber-colored sheep and the green horse.

Father would walk in from the morning chores in the barn and he smiled, but with tears in his eyes, memories of past joyous New Years with mother choking him.

Nevertheless he managed to kiss us and at the request of the oldest child present, raise his hand and give us his benediction, mumbling softly, a little embarrassed.

I wonder if he is reading over my shoulder as I write this? I hope so, because these are some of the fondest memories I have of him as a tender, loving man.

I shall not dwell on the Christmases of those years because they resurrect thoughts of neglect and hurt, while I prefer to keep my father's image as one of devotion.

Staying home with no celebration at all was quite acceptable in our relatively isolated farmhouse, but standing by in someone else's house waiting for midnight mass and watching parents deposit gifts under a dream of a Christmas tree might be compared to a hungry child licking sweets through a window. Mrs. CANTIN would be gracious enough, but the fragrance of roasting chicken and baking pork pies for their family's *reveillon* still cause me to ache.

While her children slept, to be awakened at about 11:30 p.m. for mass. Dad would leave me there (probably René too) while he got a haircut and met some of his friends. It surely was a strange situation if not cruel.

The return home after Midnight Mass in the middle of the night was nothing but misery only to be intensified by entering a cold, dark house. My poor father must have felt somewhat quietly desperate. I do not wish to accuse my father of thoughtlessness, I only want to avoid sadness. A thousand times in the past thirty years my beautiful God, the God of all orphans, has made up for these early experiences of quiet desolation. Besides, I have never stopped loving my troubled silent father wherever he may be.

August 19, 1939

On a pleasant, warm, late afternoon I was riding my bicycle home from the village, after getting my very first hair permanent. I was to sing in a local talent show that evening. As I neared our house, the neighbor, Mrs. CHEVRETTE, burst out of her front door and yelled in a panic, "Hurry up, your father just got hit by his horse and he is dying!"

As if someone had pushed a remote control button, I fell off my bike, and just as suddenly I picked myself up and proceeded, on trembling legs, to walk my bike home the few remaining yards. There I found all kinds of people, but hardly any sound. I walked in, grabbed the foot of my father's bed and with dried eyes and frozen muscles I watched Papa take his last tortured breath.

I have written a description of this unalterable event.

In the confusion of the next forty or so hours I had a hard time functioning properly. I well remember the gentle concern of Aunt Ovida, the choked up

words of Uncle Donat and the fainting into unconsciousness of my sister Denise and brother René.

The house remained full of people until the funeral. After the service at the cemetery. Uncle Donat held a family council and established a guardianship with himself as trustee and administrator, because of the five of us none was old enough to assume this responsibility legally.

I did not realize until now how heroic some of our relatives were, struggling with the grief of youngsters, dozens of immediate decisions to make and tending to some of our needs, they steadied the course of our fragmented life.

It was determined shortly after the funeral that half the cattle would be sold to pay our debts, not large ones, that my brother Philippe would return to the novitiate, that my sister Denise would be enrolled in a boarding school in Nicolet where she would study Home Economics, that my brother Florian, aged fifteen, would assume the burden of most of the farm work, and that René (10) and I (12) would resume our education at the country school. All this was to be carried out under the severe tutelage of Uncle Donat, with the help of his oldest brother Uncle Arsene (Dad's brother also), and his wife *tante* Marie.

By the middle of September, our elderly relatives, whom we did not know at all moved in with us, bringing all their belongings. Uncle Donat would come at least once a week to administer the farm and supervise the arrangement. Here I would like to recount what happened to my father.

The rains had stopped after a week of veritable deluge, and the sun finally shone on the flat fields of ripe oats. The ground was perilously muddy, and one could see, a thousand yards from the farmhouse, the horses staining to pull the bulky cultivator that was cutting and binding the grain in sheaves. However, the machine bogged down, deep in the soft, wet, black earth. My father became anxious: the crop was overripe, the beasts were restless and overburdened. After futile, strenuous efforts, the frustrated farmer decided to unhitch the horses and use a lighter, slower machine.

Walking toward the barn, man and animals were in a nervous state. This seasoned farmer had not learned to understand the nature of his new horse, "the foreigner," called *La Blonde*. For the first time in twenty years, he had been forced to buy the mare in order to supplement his stock of home bred horses. La Blonde was not faithful; she also had a skin wound on her right shoulder. As my father stood inside the barn, to the right of the high-strung mare, he pressed his left hand, inadvertently, on the animal's sore shoulder, so as to pick up a fresh harness, which lay on the ground in front of the horse. The effect was electric and deadly. La Blonde defensively brought up her right front knee and struck the master in the diaphragm. The violent impact cut his breath, he keeled over.

To compound her disloyalty. La Blonde panicked at the unexpected movement, and raced out of the barn, stampeding my father's body. He laid there, moaning, slowly regaining consciousness.

The neighbor witnessed the escape of the rebellious beast, and as is customary in farming country, hastened to bring back the runaway. He heard my father's cry of *"J'etouffe, j'etouffe!"* (I'm choking), and alerted the countryside. My father's ribs had been fractured and the lungs punctured, he was hemorrhaging. (The neighbors carried him into the house, and there he died, with family and neighbors around the bed.

For the next six years we experienced all kinds of adventures; some happy, some sad, some rewarding, some worse than frustrating and some nearly tragic.

Tante Marie was a nice looking woman, intelligent, well educated, hard working and very devout. I liked her a great deal. Her husband however was nearly a failure and when he drank, which happened too often, he was absolutely obnoxious, if not even at times dangerous. He brought sorrow to my aunt, fear to me, and much accelerated wisdom to my brother Florian.

It would be easy to write of many unpleasant memories but I choose to say that Aunt Marie, with all her shortcomings, proved courageous and steady. She showed great interest in our education, taught us to pray together and above all created a home atmosphere the like of which we had never known. I am afraid we never expressed our gratitude to her properly.

Of the many new faces of those years, we got to know our cousin Mariette, Aunt Marie's daughter. This beautiful, gentle, gracious and tender woman brought immeasurable richness in our then difficult life.

In due time. Uncle Donat enrolled me in a boarding school in Nicolet. Few young people in our neighborhood received a decent education. Thanks to my uncle I was to graduate as a fully certified teacher and signed my first contact in 1945.

By then the guardianship from our relatives had become somewhat oppressive, and after a few painful scenes our uncle and aunt moved to another house of their own, the "dictatorship" of Uncle Donat ended and we, Florian, Denise, René and I took full control of our lives and property. Free at last, we did not fear the burden of heavy responsibilities because it had been ours to carry for many years now.

To these people. Uncle Donat the priest. Uncle Arsene the unfortunate, and Aunt Marie the generous soul we owe an immeasurable debt. Sadly enough the brashness of our youth prevented us from sorting out properly the good and not so good of that phase in our life. It must not be believed that there was no love between all of us, but at times rebellion and authority caused severe conflicts. Thank heaven for relatives!

Serving Time in Jail

After I became a mother I often thought of my years in boarding school and I firmly resolved never to allow my children to attend school in such institutions. With time I tried to convince myself it couldn't have been that bad, but I can't erase the oppressing memories. My feeling somewhat defies logic in view of the fact that my children attended a parochial school and I taught

there myself for 18 years, where I found the Sisters there treated me like a sister.

Going back to 1941, I was quite excited upon receiving admission to the *Ecole Normale* to Nicolet. When the *"prospectus"* arrived by mail listing all the clothes and other items I needed, it was a thrill to watch my aunt fill my footlocker with all kinds of "new" things. A seamstress made my uniform which was black, nun-like, and I would try it on and act like a pious *"pensionnaire"* while admiring myself in the mirror. I was to learn how to scrub the stiff collar and cuffs and also how to iron my taffeta ribbon on the steam pipes in study hall.

It would have been easy to go to school in another city but Uncle Donat had been chaplain with the Sisters of the Assumption of Nicolet and no other place was even considered. Because there was no train service and the school out of the way, it made it hard for me to come home for Christmas. Worst of all, I received visitors from home only once during the years I was there.

I arrived in Nicolet alone, by bus, in early September of 1941. I did not know a soul and I felt bewildered and somewhat backward among some 300 other girls who seemed so much at ease there. Actually some of them were just as lost and scared as I was.

The Sisters wore a black habit and stiff white bib and they were busy organizing people and things. After reporting to the admission office, my footlocker was brought down to the basement. After retrieving a few personal articles, I was brought to the third floor to a large dormitory where I was to sleep with fifty-nine other girls and two nuns. God help you if you were about to go to bed and needed something in your locker! That was out!

My bed stood in the middle of a row of twenty white iron beds. There were white curtains we would draw for privacy, like a hospital. Near my bed there was a small stand and on it a washbasin and a glass. Worse than a cell because of the proximity of the two girls on each side, maybe three feet. At each end of the dormitory the two nuns had their small "cells" like ours. Some windows were always kept open of course and sometimes on extremely cold nights we would find a thin coat of ice in our washbasin in the morning.

We were allowed one bath a week, the list of names was posted on the doors, and we had exactly twenty minutes to draw water, bathe, drain and scrub the tub. Traffic had to flow, one sister saw to that!

Silence was always the rule in the dormitory. Lights were out at 9:30 p.m. Rise and shine came with a bell at 5:30 a.m., but since the Sisters were already up and dressed they would pray loudly and briefly to "offer our day." Then we proceeded to get washed, beds made, dressed and out by 6 a.m., where we all met for prayer and study in the study hall.

We were watched constantly, every day, all the time, inexorably, painfully. It seems to me that discipline came first and saving one's soul next. Anything else was incidental. At 6:55 a.m. we silently lined up for chapel where

mass was celebrated each morning at 7 a.m.

Five Years

It has been five years since I have written the last lines in this book. Going back over some of it I am amazed at what I remembered of my youth. Many of the details would now escape me. I will terminate the reminiscences of boarding school on a note of success and of sadness.

I graduated with an average of 87.7, a fully certified teacher, collecting two major awards: top prize for *Pedagogic Pratique* (teaching) and top award for literature. also won first place in the Province of Quebec in a contest, subject: essay of Lionel GIROUX, a French-Canadian historian.

Not one member of my family came to my graduation, not even Uncle Donat.

I took a bus home, in two stages. Also, my best friend let me borrow a pair of her shoes because mine were so worn out. I felt neglected. I left the *École Normale* de Nicolet never to return. Never wanting to return.

In 1987 I stopped in Nicolet (Casey and I were returning from St-Félicien), but the city was so changed that I asked a resident if I was indeed on the right street. He looked at me in surprise and said flatly, literally, "That building was torn down years ago, before I came here." No attempt at conversation.

Nearby, there was a country road called *"La route der 40,"* now a busy highway. I paused there for awhile, remembering the evening walks of forty plus years ago. The road bordered a field and one day I had written a piece after observing its freshly plowed furrows and taking in the warm scent of the earth. Another field, another time, the image of my father holding onto his plow, me running behind him, barefooted, taking in the smell of strong earth, feeling the moist soil, dark and rich, and especially trying not to step on worms. My father said one time that plowing sometimes inspired him to pray.

This closes one stage of my life.

I started teaching at the oldest school in St-Guillaume in 1944, for a salary of sixty dollars a month (10 months of the year). A real country school, 7 grades, 13 pupils in all. I will not go into details, that could be the subject of a book. In fact my cousin Marcel MARCOTTE, a Jesuit, had asked me to write about this for publication, but I had other things on my mind.

The neighbors (around the school) were very kind to me; I was often invited out for supper at their home. This was also the time I received "an order" from Gaby's mother, although I did not know her, she knew my mother. My school neighbor related the message like this, "Tell the little teacher I expect her for supper tonight." This was the beginning of a relationship that influenced and enriched the rest of my life. What the FONTAINE family, Gaby in particular, provided for me in sharing and love remains immeasurable. Gaby's mother remains my saint: joyous, giving, forgiving, and unchanging.

February 17, 1991

If I try too hard to write well I

won't write at all for the sheer effort it demands of me. I'll just let memories flow pell-mell, without much style but with genuine emotion.

Between the age of eighteen and twenty-two I met many young men, went out frequently, loved to dance, dealt with common youth problems as best as I could, learned to smoke, regretted some happenings, but through it all I survived, stronger every year. I must say that I never lost my sense of identity, I knew who I was, where I came from and that I was going somewhere worthwhile without definite direction. I fell in love and out of love a few times, refused marriage proposals three times, broke up an engagement a few weeks after accepting a diamond ring, (I gave it back) and never looked back on any of this with regret.

Through those years, many beloved touched my life generously and faithfully. Gaby and her family, my sister and her family, my brother Florian, my uncle and aunt (Nazaire et Ovida) and through unconscious fear, my uncle Donat.

I stopped teaching in 1948,1 had been sick and my sister thought I should go to Lac St.-Jean. I resolved to go to nursing school. A beloved friend convinced me of that switch in career. In early '49 Gaby and Roland took me to the U.S. (first time), for a three-week visit before starting nursing school in Montréal in February.

While at Gaby's a very handsome man noticed me and asked Roland to arrange an outing. We all went to the Hollywood Inn that evening, (bar-restaurant) for a few drinks and a sandwich. That is how I met, and fell in love, with the father of my beautiful children.

Epilogue

On 26 June 2001, there was a simple celebration at the 9 A.M. mass at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church. It had been fifty years to the day since Casey and I were married in St. Guillaume, Québec in the church where I had been baptized.

After mass on that day of renewal (2001), Father Lemoi graciously invited everyone in attendance for coffee and... at the rectory. For me it was personal and profoundly touching because as a child I had lived in a rectory for a few years in Canada; it brought back my life's story to a more complete circle.

On that occasion, Casey bought red roses – anonymously, and I gave him a framed writing (by Judith BOND) which said what our fifty years of marriage meant to me:

I love you...
For seeing me as I wish I were...
For hearing what I mean and not just what I say...
For knowing how I feel...
For helping me to grow.

June 1951-2001

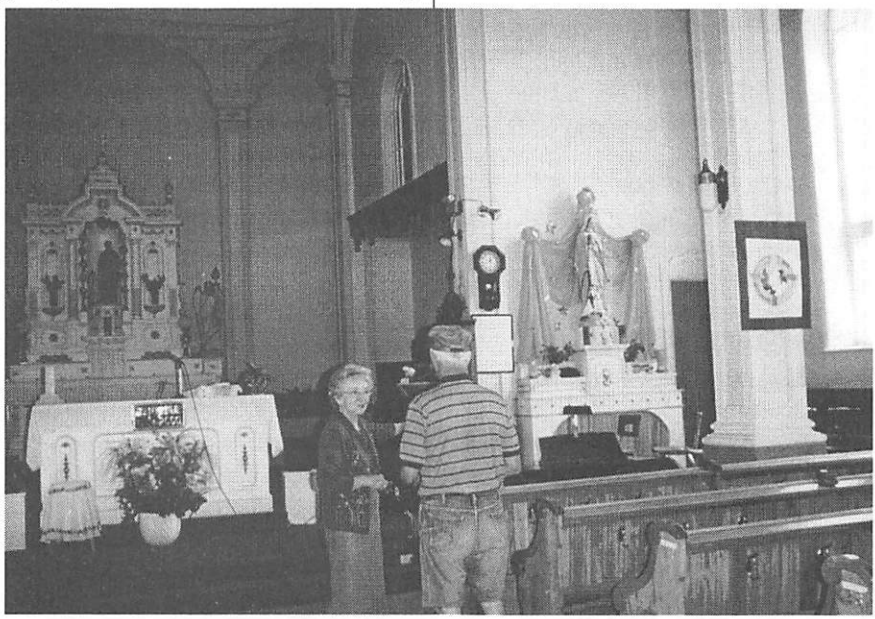
Editors note: We received a letter from Mrs. Leveillee in October, portions of which are included here since they contribute to the overall article.

"I wrote the stories at the request of my children who believed then and now that 'you did not grow

up like anyone we know.' The stories are authentic, as they must be, and were intended as a humble legacy to my immediate family.

"In July 2000 I returned to the church where I had lived with my uncle Donat (the priest). The small village remains timeless. I met two neighbors who remembered me, even recalling going to school with me and teasing me in the schoolyard. This after seven decades. Revisiting the church deeply touched me.

"I came to live in the U.S. in July 1951 as a young bride. My husband and I have raised four children who in turn have given us seven grandchildren. We are well enough to count our blessings."



The author with a neighbor in the interior of the church

A FEW REASONS TO THINK THE WORLD IS CRAZY

"Life is tough. It's tougher if you're stupid."

I recently saw a distraught young lady weeping beside her car.

"Do you need some help?" I asked.

She replied, "I knew I should have replaced the battery to this remote door unlocker. Now I can't get into my car. Do you think they (pointing to a distant convenient store would have a battery to fit this?"

"Hmmm, I dunno. Do you have an alarm too?" I asked.

"No, just this remote thingy," she answered, handing it and the car keys to me. As I took the key and manually unlocked the door, I replied, "Why don't you drive over there and check about the batteries. It's a long walk."

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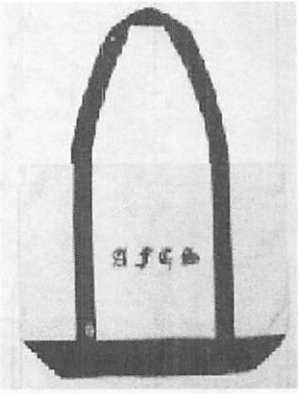

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The Godefroy Family – A Continuing Story

by: Jack Valois

Editors note: The following, an early genealogy of one of France's and Canada's prominent families of the seventeenth century continues with this installment.

Defeat on the Plains of Abraham

By the spring of 1759, Britain's colonial campaigns were finally starting to pay dividends. That summer in upstate New York, troops of General Jeffrey AMHERST (1717-1797) stormed into the Québec region and took Fort Carillon on July 26 and Fort St. Frederick on August 4. The latter stronghold, located on the southern shore of Lake Champlain, was renamed Fort Crown Point by its conquerors, and lies today in New York State.

Afterward, the overwhelming invader force made an unopposed advance along Lake Champlain while, simultaneously, English regulars and American militia seized Fort Niagara, near those famous waterfalls, on the southern shore of Lake Ontario in northern New York, securing that crucial area.

A homely, skinny major-general named James WOLFE (1727-1759), only 32 years old, now became MONTCALM's new adversary. His well-deserved reputation was earned during the brutal re-conquest of Scotland and in later, rancorous European wars. In February 1759, WOLFE sailed with his troops to Canada and anchored off Ile-d'Orleans and Pointe-de-Levy on the southern shore opposite Québec (City).

On 31 July, WOLFE's army was repulsed by obstinate Canadian militia in his first attempt to assault cliff-side fortifications at Montmorency Falls. He next called for a steady artillery barrage that reduced much of Québec (City) to rubble. The English commander then dispatched troops to torch the communities of Baye St. Paul and Malbaie as well as every *habitant* home along a 50-mile stretch of heavily populated south shore area east of the town.

By early September, MONTCALM's 2,200 regular soldiers of the LASARRE and LANGUEDOC regiments, 1,500 *Troupes de la Marine*, 10,000 civilian militia, and 1,900 Indian auxiliaries had succeeded – after a stubborn, three-month resistance – in holding the fortress of Québec (City) against 12,500 British regulars and a supporting naval fleet.

WOLFE seriously considered abandoning his so far unsuccessful siege of the Québec citadel and withdrawn the invasion troops from Canada entirely. But spies informed him of Anse-au-

Fouloi, where he could land troops, climb the steep, western side of the cliffs to the Plains of Abraham and, thereby, take the French by surprise.

On the moonless night of September 12, British ships left Cap-Rouge, upstream from Québec (City), and set sail down river to Anse-au-Foulon. An ensign from a Scottish Highland detachment, fluent in French, convinced *Canadien* sentries in a patrol boat that they were French supply ships and allowed to proceed.

At 1:00 a.m. on September 13, WOLFE gave the order to disembark and 4,500 British troops successfully landed. When Scot infantrymen cautiously reached the top of the narrow, 300-yard-long path to the cliff, they assaulted and captured the handful of flabbergasted French sentries, along with their equally surprised officers, assigned to guard that supposedly impregnable defense point.

By early morning light on September 13, the English had completed the herculean chore, in complete darkness, of assembling their force and a decisive number of light field artillery pieces atop the lofty Plains of Abraham. WOLFE had very capably managed to force the confounded General MONTCALM, who thought the cliffs insurmountable, into a less than desirable, face-to-face confrontation.

MONTCALM's next mistake was to take the initiative. After preliminary and violent skirmishing, French troops, easily noticeable in white uniform coats, hastily advanced west at 10:00 a.m. toward their waiting red-coated enemy amid beating drums and regimental flags flying in a fitful breeze. Greatly hindered by lack of mobile field artillery pieces, the French had to rely solely on the firepower of their infantry's flintlock muskets with unrifled barrels whose effective range was never more than 300 feet.

In the stress and confusion, MONTCALM's troops began firing at the English too early – at a distance just beyond 300 feet – and, as a consequence, caused little physical damage to British ranks. After reloading their cumbersome pieces, a lengthy process in itself, the French opened fire with a second volley at a distance of 200 feet from the enemy, which did cause some troop casualties.

WOLFE's disciplined regulars coolly waited until the enemy was only 120 feet away before given the order to fire their Queen Bess muskets, rank by individual rank. These weapons, incidentally, could fire two bullets before reloading. The first British volley – consisting of 3/4-inch soft lead balls weighing 1¼ ounces each – caused great havoc as it tore through the bodies of French soldiers. The front rank of these troops was hurled back as if kicked in the chest by a herd of horses' hooves.

Seven minutes later – while the defenders were still frantically reloading their own muskets – a second volley by successive English ranks proved equally devastating to an already shocked and disorganized enemy line. Some 1,400 French now lay dead or groaning from gunshot wounds. The remainder of MONTCALM's troops suddenly fled the field, their resolve temporarily broken by the carnage just witnessed. His 1,900 Indian warriors never

did get to use their weapons, for the crucial battle lasted 15 terribly brief minutes.

WOLFE was killed by an enemy musket ball that day. His 47-year-old opponent, MONTCALM, was severely wounded himself during the French withdrawal and died the next morning. Four days later – minus most of its army which somehow succeeded in escaping to Montréal – the citadel at Québec (City) formally surrendered to the English.

Maurice, V, GODEFROY DE LINTOT (1744-___), fought the British, at the tender age of 13, by attaching himself to a military unit during a 1757 campaign against the English. Two years later, still very much underage, he fought a second time against enemy troops at the pivotal 1759 Plains of Abraham battle.

Four years after the Québec capitulation, Maurice left family and homeland behind to accompany officials of the defeated Canadian *régime* to France in 1763. Commissioned an officer in a royal infantry regiment, he went on to a distinguished career, that included battle wounds and a high decoration for valor, before retiring from the military. Maurice apparently never returned to Canada.

In spite of a monumental setback at the Québec citadel in 1759, the French army wasn't finished in Canada. After retreating up the St. Lawrence River to Montréal, it fought again under General François GASTON, Duke DE LEVIS (1720-1787). He had performed noteworthy service on the continent before being appointed MONTCALM's second-in-command of colony military forces.

A ferocious attack by LEVIS – 7,000 Frenchmen against 3,800 British soldiers – sent the startled British packing on 28 April 1760 at Ste. Foy near Québec (City). Licking their wounds, the chastened enemy holed up behind the towering stone walls of the Québec fortress. Though now outnumbered by enemy troops, the canny, Scottish-born General James MURRAY (1721-1794) and his hard-pressed army stubbornly withstood a *Canadien* siege for 11 more days until 9 May 1760.

On that ominous date, the inopportune arrival of a naval fleet from Great Britain, loaded to the gunwales with military replacements, effectively halted the French advance in its tracks, causing a reluctant withdrawal to Montréal.

Sensing impending victory, three English forces – General MURRAY's strengthened division advancing up the St. Lawrence River from Québec (City), General William HAVILAND (1718-1784) and his army approaching from Lake Champlain, and the main army under General Jeffrey AMHERST (1717-1797) marching from Lake Ontario – added up to a combined force of 17,000 men converging on the defiant defenders at Montréal.

In the face of this overpowering military might, French forces had no options left and surrendered to General AMHERST, WOLFE's successor, on 18 September 1760. A proud, infrequently mismanaged empire in New France was finally and irretrievably lost.

Life in 18th Century Canada

Communities in early New France depended on outlying farms for basic

supplies of meats, vegetables, and fruits. Aside from those men engaged in farming the land, some *habitant* sons entered traditional apprentice programs in various trades: carpentry, coopering (making or repairing wood barrels and casks), blacksmithing, tinsmithing, ironmongery (fabricating metal hardware items), leather tanning, leather-making (and its related harness-making and shoe-making), meat-cutting, and baking. Those employed as fur trade *voyageurs* gained experience in bartering with Indians.

Town dwellers tended to marry later in life and, therefore, produced fewer offspring than farmers. Infant mortality was higher in towns owing to a more numerous population living in closer proximity to each other.

Such conditions made children and adults easily susceptible to contagious (and, in that day, frequently fatal) diseases like diphtheria, influenza, dysentery, pneumonia, whooping cough, chicken pox, measles, and smallpox. Physicians of the time had little knowledge of, and few successful treatments for, those common ailments. In that context, it's understandable that the average 18th century person's life span was less than 35 years.

Complex relationships flourished within this 18th century society. Prosperous merchants and working-class tradesmen willingly deferred to colony officials and local nobility...while those same aristocrats dedicated themselves to showy flamboyance, relying on money or credit to support the habits that went with that lifestyle...soldiers, marines, servants, and slaves (some Indian, some black, others unransomed English captives from frontier raids) were grateful for any kind of promising existence in terms of a supportable way of life.

At the other extreme, rural New France was populated mostly by farmers, both owners and tenants, who resigned themselves to unspectacular and monotonous lives. Despite their humdrum situation, *habitant* agricultural workers proudly cherished the right to move from one locale to another, to sell or bequeath land concessions as they pleased, and, believe it or not, tolerated very little interference from *seigniors*, merchants, or colony officials.

Increasing from a base of 15,000 inhabitants in 1700 to 18,000 by 1713, the population doubled to 35,000 by the 1730s and would nearly double again in the 1750s. By then, most residents could claim descent from earlier generations of Canadian-born colonists. The influx of new immigrants from France had slowed to a trickle.

Colonization expanded more rapidly on the flat, fertile lands around Montréal, but acreage was still available in the older Québec (City) region, home for more than half of New France. Although only able to export a small portion of wheat crops for profit, some measure of prosperity in 18th century Canada did dribble down slowly to lowly *habitants*.

Canadian aristocrats could hardly be considered rich but their standard of living was much higher than that of common folks. Then, too, few nobles, by the time the 18th century arrived, still maintained active links to prosperous family estates in France. And colony

seigniories were rarely able to support lives of lavish comfort for their patrician owners.

While wealthy fur traders and merchants were usually strangers to money worries, military officers and civil government officials had to depend strictly on salaries to maintain their upper class status, unless independently wealthy or skillfully corrupt.

An extreme example: François BIGOT (1703-1777?) who reportedly indulged in such fraudulent practices as trading with the enemy, while royal commissary at Louisbourg fortress in Nova Scotia. He was held mainly responsible for the surrender of the fort to English besiegers in 1745.

After powerful friends at the BOURBON court in France installed him in 1748 as *intendant* of Canada – highest administrative post in the colony – he methodically instituted a system of official theft. Every branch of government paid him financial tribute – estimated at 29 million *livres*, or $7,250,000 in 1959 U.S. dollars – on a scale which finally bankrupted the royal treasury at Québec (City).

Arrested after returning to France in 1759, BIGOT was imprisoned for a year and compelled to make financial restitution from his huge, illegal fortune before being permanently banished from the country. The date of his death in Switzerland is uncertain.

Advancement to a better-paying rank for career army and marine officers depended, to a certain extent, on each individual's influence with the regime governor. As commander-in-chief, he was sole distributor of periodic military promotions in addition to all appointments involving profitable, much sought-after patronage jobs in the ranks of civil government.

So in Québec (City) and Montréal, the colony elite delighted in being entertained – as long as somebody else footed the bill – at fancy balls, formal dinners, high-stakes gambling parties, and elaborate, gourmet banquets. In those preferred settings, the ruling aristocrats were able to display an elegance and luxury totally at odds with the bleak, everyday lives of most French settlers.

As in France, nobles were expected to ostentatiously flaunt themselves on suitable occasions. They had to own grander homes than social inferiors, clothe themselves in the latest Parisian fashions, and be attended by servants and black or Indian slaves. Few *régime* gentry appear to have immersed themselves in intellectual or literary pursuits and the education sought for their children consisted largely of military training for sons and instruction in social etiquette for daughters.

Typifying the gentry of that era was René, III, GODEFROY DE TONNANCOUR (1669-1738), grandson of the first family emigre, Jean GODEFROY DE LINTOT. Himself the son of a royal King's Attorney, René succeeded – with a personal assist from none other than King Louis XIV – to his father's post in 1695. In 1714, he became Royal Prosecutor, again succeeding his late father, thanks to the French King's intercession on his behalf, with the exalted rank equivalent to a lieutenant-general, in

charge of all civil and criminal/legal matters at Trois-Rivières.

The town-dwelling clergy was in some respects a branch of the aristocracy. Catholic priests of the Jesuit and Sulpician orders, plus Ursuline nuns, were first attracted to Canada by the prospect of performing missionary service in the wilds of North America to convert the minds and souls of heathen Indians to Christianity.

By the 18th century, however, fully 80 percent of clergy had moved into the towns, far removed from the dangers and uncivilized inconveniences of forest tribal villages. Yet, 70 percent of their red-skinned and white-skinned "clientele" were still country dwellers.

In Montréal, the chief commerce was furs while, in Québec (City), business imports and exports dominated the mercantile scene. Whatever the commodity, merchants saw themselves as a select group of experts in the complexities of financial credit, bookkeeping, and merchandising.

They furnished local communities with rum, molasses, and coffee imported from French possessions in the Caribbean Islands. France itself supplied textiles, clothing, jewelry, wines and liquors, even books and art objects (two commodities mostly unknown to farmers living in rural Canada).

The closest thing to a modern-day "minority" problem focused around *Troupes de la Marine* who garrisoned New France communities. When not on military campaigns in the field or taking turns manning lonely but dangerous frontier forts, these lowly paid regulars, during rare moments of peace within the colony, could actually be hired as part-time laborers by tradesmen or farmers. The monthly pay of a 1688 private was $2.00 in 1959 Canadian currency. A bottle of brandy at the time would cost that marine from $1.00 to $3.00 depending on its availability or scarcity.

Some marines sought, and usually qualified for, early discharges in order to marry, receive a royal dowry, and agree to remain in Canada as new settlers. It was the crown's way of encouraging population growth. Meanwhile, the presence of many hundreds of virile young men under loose military discipline was a potential source of trouble.

These troops were indeed responsible for much petty theft and drunkenness that afflicted communities in New France. As the numbers of military men increased during the French and Indian wars, so, coincidentally, did the illegitimacy rate revolving around unmarried females in those regions where marines or soldiers were stationed.

To be born on a farm in New France meant an overwhelming likelihood of spending one's life in dreary monotony, ignorance, and toil. Except, of course, for sheer moments of terror erupting during not so uncommon Iroquois attacks. In the face of an always threatening red menace from New York Colony, bountiful farm harvests ensured that at least the stomachs of agricultural workers never lacked for nutritional nourishment.

By hard work, good fortune, or a shrewd marriage, *habitant* youths could

improve their lot in life. For example, the opportunity existed for bored, adventure-seeking young men – or even married farmers in need of extra income – to enter into notarial contracts as part-time *voyageurs* every springtime, once next season's crops were planted.

Voyageurs or *engagés* (another term for *mangeurs de lard*, the pork-eating canoemen) were always in demand to paddle canoe-loads of trade goods from Lachine, just below Montréal, to the Michilimakinac (now Mackinac Island, Michigan) fur trading post situated 1,700 miles to the west.

More daring *habitant* youths flocked to the *hivernant* ranks: better-paid, wintering northmen who signed up for risky, three-year tours in the western Indian wilderness. Canadian northmen became life-size role models for America's own mountain men, those hard-bitten, devil-may-care, red man-fighting frontiersmen and free trappers who roamed all over the western U.S. prairies, forests, and mountains during the 19th century in their hunt for furs, adventure, and compliant squaws

A FEW REASONS TO THINK THE WORLD IS CRAZY

"Life is tough. It's tougher if you're stupid."

Recently, when I went to McDonald's I saw on the menu that you could have an order of 6, 9 or 12 Chicken McNuggets. I asked for a half dozen nuggets. "We don't have half dozen nuggets," said the teenager at the counter.

"You don't?" I replied.

"We only have six, nine, or twelve," was the reply.

So I can't order a half dozen nuggets, but I can order six?"

"That's right." So I shook my head and ordered six McNuggets.

The paragraph above doesn't amaze me because of what happened a couple of months ago. I was checking out at the local Foodworld with just a few items and the lady behind me put her things on the belt close to mine. I picked up one of those "Dividers" that they keep by the cash register and placed it between our things so they wouldn't get mixed.

After the girl had scanned all of my items, she picked up the "Divider" looking it all over for the bar code so she could scan it. Not finding the bar code she said to me, "Do you know how much this is?"

I said to her "I've changed my mind, I don't think I'll buy that today."

She said "OK" and I paid her for the things and left.

She had no clue to what had just happened.

A lady at work was seen putting a credit card into her floppy drive and pulling it out very quickly. When inquired as to what she was doing, she said she was shopping on the Internet and they kept asking for a credit card number, so she was using the ATM thingy."

AFGS RESEARCH POLICY

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NOTE: *Do not send payment in advance.*

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After receiving your properly submitted request, we will immediately start your research. We will then notify you of our findings and bill you for the research performed according to the applicable rates quoted above.

STEP THREE: YOUR APPROVAL

After receiving our report and billing statement, return the top portion with a check for the proper amount payable to AFGS. Upon receipt, we will forward your requested research.

All requests not resolved by the Research Committee will be placed in the Question and Answer section of *Je Me Souviens.*

Again, please do not send payment in advance.

Antoine Terroux: Travels of a Gascon

by: Henri Subsol

Editor's note: Monsieur Subsol is a resident of France. This article was translated by Liz Owen.

Prologue

On this the first day of 1676, it was cold in Gascony. A small group of people huddled round the font in the church of St. Michael, Verdun. The boy-child, born on the last day of 1675, was to be christened Antoine. Present as witnesses were André TERROUX his father, Antoine MARTIN his godfather, Antoinette CABARE his godmother, Jean SOULIE consul, Guillaume ROMIGUIERES royal notary and prosecutor, and Monsieur VILLENOVE, the priest. Times were hard, chances of survival were poor, and no one present could possibly guess that the newly-baptized child would live a long, adventurous life – long enough to know some of his great- grandchildren – and launch a dynasty of THÉROUX which today extends throughout Canada and the USA and even beyond.

Terroux Country

Verdun-sur-Garonne, situated in the Guyenne on the borders of Gascony and Languedoc, is a very old town.[1] To date, partial archeological excavations confirm a permanent settlement here since the Bronze Age. The place name 'Verdun', meaning approximately 'fortified town', can be found all over France.

Written sources date from as early as 1000 AD, where one document speaks of the seignory of Verdun. As part of the fief of the TERRIDE-LOMAGNE family, Verdun was added successively to the Comté of Toulouse and to the Crown of France. From the XIIIth century, The town was the seat of an important bailiwick comprising 44 rural communities on both sides of the river. Afterwards Verdun became the principal town of an area with the right to elect its representatives – *le Pays de Verdun* – a Jursdiction which ran from the Agenais to the south of Toulouse but only on the left bank of the Garonne. Its importance diminished over the centuries until, after the French Revolution, it became the calm, almost sleepy, chief town of the district that we know today.

Verdun still has some traces of its old ramparts, including a fortified gate, but absolutely nothing which recalls the important river port it was before the construction of the canals[2] joining the Atlantic to the Mediterranean.

Antoine's Origins

The first traces of the TERROUX are to be found at the start of the XVIIth century. It seems that this patronymic,

of Germanic origin like so many others all over France, does not belong to this region. However there is a hamlet called *Terroux* in the rural district of Galembrun, near Grenade-sur-Garonne, only 20 kilometers from Verdun. There is another *Terroux* near Figeac, in the Lot. It was usual for place name and patronymic to correspond, though we do not know which derived from which; for example did the Terroux bear the name of the village or hamlet where they lived, or was Terroux so-called because the TERROUX lived there?

Whatever the case may be, the TERROUX probably came from one of these places, perhaps even from both, as there was frequent migration from the limestone plateaux of the Lot to the richer regions of the Garonne valley.

André, Antoine's father, was born on 6th June 1638. He was the third son of Pierre TERROUX[3] and Jeanne DELMAS. Another brother was born in 1646. André's three brothers were all called Guillaume, which does not make identification of them easy when trawling through the archives. Happily this does not apply to André as his name was not in widespread use at the time. He was baptized the day he was born; his godfather was a lawyer André QUERGUY[4] and his godmother was *Demoiselle* Marguerite DISPAN. The TERROUX being of humble origin, the high level of this baptismal sponsorship is worth considering; poor they may have been but definitely honest. This reputation went beyond Pierre and Jeanne and continued with André and his family.

Pierre died on 10 January 1648, when André was only 10. It was his older brother, one of the Guillaumes, born on 3 December 1626, who, with André's mother, assumed parental authority and gave his consent when in 1662, André decided to marry Jeanne CLAMENS.[5]

Jeanne was born on 19 October 1641 in the parish of Bouillac, a small village perched on a hill not far from Verdun. Daughter of Bernard CLAMENS and Jeanne GAUTIE, she was baptized on 21 October; her godfather was Raymond BLANC and her godmother Jeanne COURDY, both from Le Burgaud, another village near Verdun. We know of a brother called Gillis born 24 October 1636. Their mother died on 28 February 1653, when Jeanne was only eleven. Bernard followed her on 5 February 1662. In the parish register it says that he was a woodcutter, and that he was buried *"in front of the church porch in the tomb of Jean Clamens."* Here again we are dealing with a family of modest means, but of 'the deserving poor'.[6] However, Jeanne GAUTIE did have some property which was passed on to her children, consisting of a house with some ground and outbuildings on the outskirts of Bouillac, together worth 128 livres.

When Antoine TERROUS and Jeanne CLAMENS decided to get married, Jeanne was a servant at the Golden Lion whose landlord was Jean COUDERC. This inn seems to have been in its time the best hostelry in Verdun. On the site of what later became the Hospital of St Jacques, the Golden Lion was a favoured meeting place for the Verdun middle-class. Even informal meetings of the Town Council used to be held there, as the archives of Verdun testify. It was in this inn that the marriage agreement

was put in due form and signed.

It was drawn up by Maitre VILLENOVE[7], a Verdun lawyer, in the presence of Jean BELANGUIER, Jeanne's cousin,[8] Pierre JOUGIA master mason, Pierre DUSAY *fournier*,[9] Jean JAUVERT son of Jacques, labourer and others – DELMAS, SAILHOU, QUERGUY[10] and finally François-Etienne COUDERC, who was the only person to sign the document apart from the lawyer. It is astonishing just how many witnesses there were, and in such a place. For one thing, it proves how many friends Jeanne and Antoine had; as to the venue, it was relatively current for such a document to be compiled either in the home of the fiancée or, as is the case here, of a friend or of someone who considered the young woman to be part of his own family. Similar proofs of affection – it would be tempting to say of paternalism – are evident throughout the marriage. The existence of a 'marriage agreement' was normal at that time, even if the couple-to-be had very little. This document contains some interesting information, and is worth looking at more closely. It states that the dowry of Jeanne CLAMENS is made up of *"each and everyone of her possessions and rights present and to come whatsoever they may be, and consisting among other things of a feather mattress and an old feather cushion, an old cover, four linen sheets, two new and two worn and six used serviettes made of 'palmetto'[11]... and the remainder consisting of certain land situated in the said village of Bouillac dependant on the succession of the said deceased Madame Gautie her mother"*. In return André pledged his possessions *"future and to come."*

The marriage was celebrated on 5 November 1662 in St. Michael's at Verdun. It was not until 5 June 1671 that a note in the margin of the contract tells us that the terms had been fulfilled. Why the delay? The reason is simple; Gillis, Jeanne's brother, had to be able to buy out the undivided portion of Jeanne's inheritance. The act of assignation passed by Maitre VILLENOVE on 28 August 1668, specified that the sale took place *"quit of all duties[12], for the sum of 32 livres in return for a down payment of 7 livres 10 sols in silver louis and deniers[13] the remainder payable as follows – 4 livres 10 sols at Michaelmas next year and the balance in three years"* this sum being paid 5 June 1671, as evidenced by a note in the margin of the act of transfer. The note in the marriage contract specified that André TERROUX *"swore that he had received previously or at present from Jeanne Clamens his wife, she being present, the sum of 40 livres, together with a feather mattress and a feather cushion, a bed cover 5 used sheets a dozen napkins;"* in the sum of 40 livres *"is included the sum of 32 livres which his said wife received from Gillis Clamens her brother for the sale of his part of the goods of the late Jeanne Gautie their mother"*, the remainder *"together with the said goods coming from what his said wife had earned in salary while she was a servant with Jean Couderc, landlord, and which he received from his wife."*

We know that in 1671 Jeanne was no longer a servant at the Golden Lion and that the couple was far from rich. The TERROUX of Verdun were humble folk. André's brothers were respectively a carpenter, a cobbler and a waterman.[14] André was a waterman too but he seems

to have been the poorest of the lot. We have as proof the tally rolls for 1686 where we find:

"Guillaume Teroux carpenter taxed 1 livre 4 sols and 9 deniers on his property and 2 livres 7 sols and 6 deniers on his business; Guillaume Teroux cobbler (the youngest of the brothers) taxed 1 livre 11 sols and 7 deniers on his property and 2 livres 7 sols on his business; Guillaume Teroux waterman taxed 11 sols and 11 deniers on his property and 2 livres 7 sols for his privileges."[15]

Finally André TEROUX waterman *"is not seized of any land"* and is only taxed at *"1 livre 3 sols and 9 deniers for his privileges."*

The fact that André and his wife had no real estate, a rather unusual state of affairs at this time, even among poor folk, means that we have no idea where they lived or where exactly the children were born. There are some indications that Jeanne continued to work as a servant for various people, so that could mean that she and the family lived with whoever she was working for at any given time. This was current practice; the top storey of middle-class homes was traditionally reserved for housing the servants.[16] It is also possible that the couple rented somewhere in town, or rather in the Bastide where we know, thanks to our archives, that there were several rooming houses. It is unlikely that we shall ever know the truth, but that does not really matter for what follows.

Antoine's Childhood

During their 26 years together, André and Jeanne had 10 children of whom only four reached adulthood.

– Jeanne born 3 January 1664, married on 25th June 1684 to François VIGNAUS waterman, to whom we shall return later;

– Andrive born 28 August 1670 about whom we know only that she was still alive in 1689;

– Antoine, the future Canadian;

– Raymond born 2 March 1679.

Antoine lived a life that differed little from that of the other children of the numerous day laborers or watermen in Verdun at the time. He had no education, which was normal for the time, but he did not hang around the streets. It was usual men to help one's parents in their workaday life. To start with, Antoine probably helped his mother with her domestic chores, then when he got stronger it was likely that he assisted his father, thus learning his future occupation of waterman 'on the job'.

André TERROUX died on 4 March 1688, of natural causes it would appear.

So Jeanne was a widow at 47 with 3 children who were still minors. Since 1684 at least she had worked for M. Mathieu ROLLEAU,[17] a man of some importance, adviser to the King,[18] Collector of Fees at the Chancellery. On 1 December 1689, at the home of M. ROLLEAU, Maitre SOULIE the notary drew up a contract of marriage between Jeanne CLAMENS and Nicolas CHAMPIER master surgeon of Comberouger.[19] Apart from the happy co-ple, the notary and the master of the house, there were also present Maître Pierre COURDY royal notary of Ca-

nals[20] – who signed the document with Maitre SOULIE – M. ROLLEAU and Nicolas CHAMPIER.

A marriage of convenience arranged by ROLLEAU and his wife? It seems more than likely if one is to judge by the care taken over the drawing up of the contract and the contents of Jeanne's dowry which are detailed below.

After the usual preamble referring to the reciprocal undertakings made by the couple and the customs of Verdun which governed them, the subject of the children is tackled in these terms:- *"... and because from the marriage of the said Clamens with the late Terroux there are Antoine, Raymond et Andrive Terroux who are still with the said Clamens, it is agreed between the bride-and-groom-to-be that the said Champier will be bound to feed and look after them as to lodging and clothing until they reach the age of 25[21] or are promised in marriage, in return for their working as best as they are able and bringing home the fruits of their labors".* The contract provided for an inventory of the goods due to the children which unfortunately it has been impossible to find.

After that came the guarantees over Jeanne's future *"in case the said Champier should die before the Said Clamens in which case she shall enjoy the possession and use of the house seized in the village of Comberouger for life; the said house has opposite to the east the house of Jean (name illegible), to the south the main track, to the west the street and to the north Jean Gaussail; and as annual pension for life three sacks of wheat, two sacks of mixture[22] each sack holding a hundred liters, Comberouger measure, a pipe of wine[23], twenty livres in silver, and a dress[24] the wheat and the mixture in the ground[25] or by weight payable every two years, the wine to go into the cellar and the money payable half at Saint Barthélemy and the other half at Easter."*

The marriage took place on 6 of February 1690 in the church at Verdun, and on the 15th, it was noted in the margin of the contract that the dowry had been 'paid'. This was only briefly mentioned in the contract; now we have the details: *" ...a old walnut bedstead, a coverlet, a cushion stuffed with feathers-a little worn, a set of bed-linen of green raze with its surround also of raze in the same color with a fringe of silk of eight feet, another coverlet and cushion stuffed with feathers-very old, an iron box locked with a key, a copper warming-pan, a casserole[26] all a bit old, six serviettes and two tablecloths-embroidered, and metal spoon for pouring soup onto bread a metal plate, of all of which property the said Champier is content."*[27]

A number of the items in this list would not normally be found in the dowry of a poor waterman's widow. At the very least it seems as if the walnut bed (even if old), the bed-linen with its silk fringe and the embroidered table linen were a present from the people we believe to be Jeanne's last employers, the ROLLEAU.

Thus were the TERROUX children 'exiled' to Comberouger.

Did Antoine go with his mother? Perhaps not, for his brother-in-law François VIGNAUS[28] was a waterman just as André had been. Our guess, as already stated, is that Antoine followed his father and already knew the job. It could therefore be assumed that he stayed in Verdun, working with his brother-in-law. It is a reasonable hypothesis and one which could explain what happened later.

The Historical Context

At that time, the Garonne supported a large working population, from the fishermen to the men who poled the rafts, as well as the miller who owned a floating mill, and the merchant. At the bottom of the ladder were the boat haulers, whose job it was to pull the barges up river. At the top of this hierarchy were the employers and the supply-merchants occupying an enviable situation which put them on a level with the master craftsmen and the businessmen. The fishermen were a class apart – humble folk who sold their produce direct, dependant only on themselves and whose only wealth was their boat and their nets.

These 'sailors' attracted royal interest Soon anyone who 'sailed' was considered capable of serving in the Royal Navy, especially in this last decade of the XVIIth century when France, at war against the Grand Alliance of the League of Augsburg,[29] had great need of sailors to defend her coasts and distant colonies. A census of all the sailors in the kingdom was the idea of the Chevalier de Valbeille. Maritime France was divided into 'Intendances'[30], themselves divided into 'regions', in their turn subdivided into 'districts'. Verdun was in the district of Toulouse, region of Guyenne, Intendance of Rochefort. Every sailor who appeared on the register could be called up to serve on the King's vessels once every three years, from the age of 15.

Life on board one of these ships was hard. The sailors were housed between decks, they slept in hammocks called *branles*,[31] whence the French expression for 'Clear the decks'[32] when a battle was in the offing. Apart from wounds, which often necessitated amputations carried out in the most appalling conditions, sickness raged. Out of a strength of 15,000 officers, sailors and cadets registered every year at Rochfort, at the end of the year a thousand were disabled, five or six hundred were prisoners, almost as many again had deserted and six hundred were dead. It is easy to understand the reluctance of those who were called up. especially those coming from a 'freshwater sailor'[33] background, who were used to spending almost every night at home and who were not in any way prepared for sailing on choppy seas in boats that rolled from side to side. There was a way of side-stepping conscription, which was to enroll in the *Compagnies Franches de la Marine*; formed in 1690 they were the forerunners of what were at one time 'French colonial troops'. Their mission was, on the one hand, to assure the defense of the ports and shores of France, and on the other, to defend her colonies which were frequently threatened by England.

A particularly bloody episode in the war, waged on the high seas by the English and French, occurred in 1692, the battle of La Hougue. This was a real disaster for the French who saw their

ships, still afloat, being burned on the coast by the English. There was a tremendous outcry which could be heard as far as Verdun where 19 of the surviving sailors – deserters, of course – took refuge.[34]

In 1693, Antoine TERROUX was in his 18th year and thus liable to be called up if, as we think, he was a waterman working with his brother-in-law. The numbers required were substantial; it had been decided to raise 1000 sailors in the Guyenne, which meant that few of those due to be called would escape conscription and Antoine had a good chance of being part of it.

In 1693 also, the CFM had decided to recruit one of the biggest group of relief troops ever to go to Canada: 500 men at a time when the total strength in the colony at that time was 1500 men. It was not a question of creating new companies, but only of replacing soldiers who had died or had been demobilized. In this instance recruitment was done through the *Intendance of Rochefort*. The recruits were not given their postings before they left; that would be done in Québec.

There is enough material so far to advance a feasible hypothesis about how Antoine came to leave for New France, and it would be easy to invent a gloriously romantic future for him. Perhaps a little dramatic licence could be allowed, without getting in the way of the known facts.

Antoine Théroux Dit Laferte

At the beginning of Spring 1693, Antoine was taken with other 'freshwater sailors' from the Guyenne, to Rochefort where they were assigned to the King's stops which were due to take part in the next campaign. The recruiting sergeants of the CFM trawled the taverns and the quays of the town looking for 500 volunteers, going so far as to seduce away regular soldiers and seamen. That was easily done; they appeared in magnificently becoming uniforms, while the sailors were in rags. The regular soldiers conceded nothing to the CFM in the matter of uniform, but even they were attracted by the prospect of *"experiencing the country, of having only to measure oneself against the savages who flee at the mere sight of a uniform and the possibility of demobilisation at the end of three years stationed in a brand new country with a great future"*, even if not as many were tempted.

Antoine had nothing to lose, the choice was easily made; heigh-ho for the CFM!

The new recruits were assembled in the fort on the Isle of Oléron not far from Rochefort. There, while waiting to leave, they were given clothing for the voyage: a jacket of Mazamet[35] wool, a pair of grey canvas trousers, a pair of stockings, a pair of shoes, one or two shirts, a woollen hat, a comb, a blanket and a hammock. In the early years of the CFM. they outfitted the soldiers as soon as they were recruited, but quickly realized that the fine, costly uniforms lost their – shall we say? – freshness, after sometimes more than two months at sea in conditions easily imagined; as the hammocks were strung m two tiers, the unfortunates on the bottom row used to get – you can guess especially if their upstairs neighbor was seasick, which was the usual lot for most of those on

board. While waiting to leave, the recruits were given a sort of basic military training, so beloved of all fighting forces.

The ships carrying Antoine and his companions left Rochefort at the end of May. They arrived in dribs and drabs from mid-July onwards.

Our new Canadian – the term *Québecois* was yet not in use – started badly. The crossing had exhausted him, as it had many others. His ship must have arrived on 5 August, because on that day and the day after, 16 newly arrived soldiers were admitted to the Québec General Hospital, Antoine among them; he was registered on the 6th and stayed there for 11 days the first time round, then he was readmitted on the 26th for another 7 days. He was lucky; some died in the hospital, among them one Anthoine FAUS, 24, from Montauban, the chief town of the *Intendance* in which Verdun was situated.[36]

It is possible that some who took ship at Rochefort never arrived, but died and were buried at sea, wrapped in sail canvas and weighted down by a canon ball, according to custom. It was scurvy, more than anything else which took such a toll during the crossings, but there was also dysentery caused by spoiled provisions, and water which stagnated in the barrels.[37]

So, having recovered from their awful journey, those recruits that were left met again on the Québec parade ground, where they finally got their postings.[38]

Some sort of dividing up had already been done but only by numbers. Each Company Captain, in turn and according to length of service, made his choice. Antoine was chosen by one of the most prestigious among them. Captain Daniel D'AUGER de SUBERCASE. Although a former Captain in the Regiment of Britanny. SUBERCASE was a native of Orthez in the Béarn at the foot of the Pyrenees. In a way that was Antoine's home turf, or very nearly. Antoine was given his equipment, and the *nom de guerre* which was to be his in the army – LAFERTE. This name, coming from the old French, means 'fortress'; it was rather common in the army but was also bracketed with the names of French towns that had been fortified in the past: La Ferté Vidame, la Ferté Saint Aubin, la Ferté Bernard etc. This pseudonym perhaps gives us an idea of the size and stature of the man.

He must have cut a fine figure in his lovely new uniform; *"Jerkin of grey-white linen lined with blue, decorated with pewter buttons, trousers of blue Aumale serge, stockings of the same (stockings rapidly replaced by gaiters/ leggings) a pair of shoes, shirt, tie, three-cornered hat edged with a strip of artificial silver, sword-belt and a sword".*[39] The sword was replaced by a small axe and the tricorne by a working bonnet for trips into the forest and raids against the Indians. A gun and its necessary adjuncts completed the ensemble.[40] It should be noted that the uniform, which in principal had to be renewed every year, belonged to the soldier. So 18 deniers a day were kept back from his pay, and the same amount for his food. As he got 6 *sols* a day i.e 72 *deniers*, he only had 3 *sols* a day (36

deniers) for himself.

Antoine was now a proper soldier, and probably took part in various campaigns. Unfortunately this is the start of a period for which we have no accurate information, not even a tantalizing trace. We lose track of Antoine for nine years. It is likely that he led the life of any other soldier in the CFM, who was sent, sometimes alone, to guard a fort which was often only *"sorry wooden huts surrounded by a palisade"*. They had the unenviable task of assuring the presence of the Kingdom of France in often hostile country, with several *savages* under them, whose loyalty could not always be counted on.

It is almost certain that he took part in the famous expedition against the Onontagues, led by FRONTENAC in person even though he was 74 at the time.[41]

In fact the Company of SUBERCASE, who was major general of the troops, was part of a regular army of 2000 men made up of Canadian volunteers, regular troops and American Indian allies.

These periods of guard duty and expeditions were happily interspersed with periods of calm, of rest periods in the larger forts or in towns such as Montréal or Québec. As there were no barracks in these places, soldiers were billeted with the inhabitants, especially during the winter. They shared the family life of those with whom they stayed, who had to provide *"a bed a mattress a coverlet, food and a place by the hearth"*. The soldier took with him his daily ration which was incorporated into the family 'vittels'. This fixed ration was a pound and a half of bread, a quarter of a pound of salted fat bacon or half a pound of salted beef, a quarter of a pound of dried peas. Not exactly the height of gastronomy, but it represented some 3000 calories and was a not inconsiderable addition to the common pot.

While in garrison, the soldier had plenty of free time which allowed him either to help with the work of the family with whom he was staying, which would be much appreciated, or to have some part time work which would increase his meager income. Living cheek by jowl with a family allowed a closer relationship with a daughter of the family, and many marriages resulted.

The Indian Wars, which caused so many deaths, ended m 1701 with the Great Peace of Montréal, a treaty signed with all due pomp in that town by most of the Indian Nations, friend or foe, and the representative of the King of France. At last, soldiers could think about marrying before being demobilized. A year later, we meet Antoine again, though in rather peculiar circumstances.

Antoine's First 'Marriage'

In colonial 'Canada', getting married was not easy. From the outset, there were not enough women; 'Daughters of the King',[42] poor orphans, dowried by the king of France, were sent to remedy this lack. A little later, with the population growing significantly, it was the all-powerful Church which made things more complicated. Marriage between people who had been born there was not a problem, as it was easy to look in the parish registers to verify the catholicity of those wishing to marry and be

assured that they were not already married. It was less easy if, for example, the man had been born in the Old Country. It was soon rare for a zealous priest, before giving his assent, not to ask for a birth certificate from the affianced couple. This certificate, which could only be had from the parish where one was born, took at least a year to come from France. One Michel GAUMIN, a state administrator, found a way around this. In 1579, the Council of Trent – among its other decrees – fixed the rules which defined a valid marriage. The couple had to announce their willingness to contract such a marriage in the presence of a priest and two witnesses. All they needed to do was to take advantage of a Mass – a solemn one for preference, so that the priest was very involved in the service, just before the *Ite Missa Est* – then get up and say their vows before two complicit witnesses. The final blessing was considered as being applicable to the 'wedding ceremony'. Then everyone went off to find the priest and asked him to please enter the marriage in the parish register. The priest of course, caught out by his flock, protested and fulminated, but caved in before the argument that *"the conditions demanded by the Council of Trent have been fulfilled."* Well-known people had recourse to this procedure; in 1711, Louis de MONTOLEON, an officer in the Marine Corps, married Marie-Anne-Josette de SAINT MARTIN, a descendant of the noble colonial family of JONCHEREAU de Saint Denis, '*à la gamine*'.

At the end of 1701 or beginning of 1702, Antoine had a relationship with Michèle FORTIN. Daughter of Louis FORTIN and Catherine GODIN, she was born at Lachine and baptized there on 30 April 1678. They seem to have been very much in love with each other and decided to put their relationship on a legal footing. It is likely that the priest they consulted made difficulties by demanding a baptismal certificate. But there was no time to waste; Michèle was pregnant[43] and waiting for a year was out of the question. Their only recourse was marriage *à, la gaumine*. Antoine and Michèle chose 2 February, Candle-mas, to go the church in Ville Marie, where during a solemn Mass they made their declaration which would make them man and wife. Shortly after, accompanied by their two witnesses and a couple of close friends, they presented themselves at the doors of the Seminary and asked to meet M. de BELMONT, the Vicar-General of the parish. But things went badly; the vicar refused to legitimize their marriage; our good Garçon Antoine 'lost his cool', things got difficult and the Vicar General threw them out. They tried again the following day; but de BELMONT would not budge.

Things stayed that way until 25 September. Then, with Jean-Baptiste MAGDELEINE (Godfather) and Marie-Louise RAINVILLE (Godmother), Antoine TERROUS, known as LAFERTE, soldier in the Company of M. SOUBERCASE, visited REMY, the curate of Lachine, to present for baptism a daughter born the day before to him and Michèle – *"the woman he told us he married at the Seminary of Ville Marie"* – in the house of Marie FORTIN, the wife of Jean CHOTART otherwise known as SAINTONGE[44]. Antoine's words seemed odd to the curate. Antoine, probably badgered by question-

ing, explained that, in the presence of Vivian MAGDELEINE known as 'Sweetness', of Jacques-H, also known as *River Dihan*[45], of Pierre LEDUC and René GODIN, he had married Michele FORTIN before M. de BELMONT. After which M. de BELMONT had told them... he had nothing to say to them and wanted nothing to do with them. Antoine did say that he had always thought of Michèle as his lawful wife, that he lived with her and acknowledged the child as his. The priest baptized the child – she was called Marie-Louise – he could not do otherwise, but he doubted Antoine's sincerity, and decided to find out more.

The following day he went to Fort Cullierer where Michèle's uncle, Vivien MAGDELEINE, lived. According to Antoine, he was a witness to his 'marrage'. Doubtless very embarrassed, Vivien MAGDELAINE confirmed that on 2 February, Candlemas, the group that Antoine mentioned had gone to the Seminary to ask the Vicar General to marry the two lovebirds, that he had refused then, and the day after. Michele's uncle added that he doubted if marriage *à la gaumine* was valid, unless it was 'put on a regular footing'. The curate of Lachine was convinced; he forbade the 'newly weds' to live together on the pain of eternal damnation. The risk of anathema could not have been clearer.

Then what happened? The only thing we know for sure is that Michele disappears; there is no mention other in any of the parish registers which are practically the only witnesses, along with notarized legal documents, to the life of the Colony. Did she enter a convent? That would be one explanation, as a change of name would cover her tracks. A more dramatic supposition; did she take her own life? The river was not very far from Lachine and the poor woman could have been completely thrown by her misfortune. We simply do not know. What we do know is that Antoine now has a child for whom he is responsible.[46]

Off to Detroit

In 1706 SOUBERCASE was named Governor of Plaisance and of Acadie. The company in which Antoine served was now SABREVOIE's company.

That year Antoine LAUMET – known as Lamothe CADILLAC, the man who founded Detroit – was looking for men to boost the population of that town. He wanted married men who were in a position to settle in the place he described as a 'Paradise full of promise'; he had land at his disposal to distribute; the first colonists and soldiers who had followed him when the fort was established in 1701 were starting to benefit from a similar scheme; in a letter to the Minister for the Colonies, PONTCHARTRAIN, he had written *"This village which will certainly become one of the most splendid towns on the American continent is a fine fort built of stakes, with about sixty houses built at right-angles to the only road, Sainte Anne, so called for reasons which are upsetting but dear to me. There is a garrison of disciplined, well-chosen soldiers, – about 300 of the best trained, and the strongest in the New World; moreover, there are several other people who spend some months of the year here. The villages of the savages, of about six to seven thousand souls, are within rifle range. All the land is well cultivated and the first maize har-*

vest is excellent." This attracted about a hundred people including Antoine.

In May and June of 1706, wedding succeeded wedding in the parish of Notre Dame of Montréal, as the prospective settlers had to be married and many of those chosen were not; the calling of the bans took time. Time was pressing and people asked M. VALCHON de Belmont to grant dispensations, which he did willingly – this is the man who made so many difficulties for Antoine and Michele. Had he forgotten 2 February 1701? However, as he had done for others, he granted a dispensation of two bans for the marriage of Antoine with Marguerite LAFOREST. She was only 17, Antoine was just over 30 but said he was 29: Oddly he said he was the son of André TEROUX, which is correct, but also of Jeanne PETIT, which is wrong. Had he forgotten his mother's surname after all these years? Was it a voluntary mistake? We will never know. Lamothe CADILLAC liked contracts, so he required all his recruits to have one drawn up before getting married in church. So on 10 June, Antoine and Marguerite appeared before Maitre LEPAILLEUR of Laferte, who drew up a contract in due form, and then they went to Father PRIAT who was acting as a parish curate. They were not the only ones.

There was Jacques CHAMEL dit LAGROANDERIE, sergeant of TONTY's Company, Pierre ESTEVE dit YOUTH, and Jerome MARILLAC, both of St Martin's Company. Pierre ESTEVE, who was also going to Detroit, was married on April 12th. He came from the Lauragais, an area quite near to Verdun – an Occitan like Antoine and like Lamothe CADILLAC himself[47]. There were others on this expedition, for example François CHARLU, dit CHANTELOU, married the same day as Antoine who was from the Quercy,[48] Antoine DUYPUY dit BEAU-REGARD, married the day before, from Roquebrune in the Gers,[49] – that is, from Gascony, like Antoine.

Others going to Detroit were married round about 10 June: Bonaventure COMPIN, dit LESPERANCE, Blaise FOUDUROSE, François CARRE dit LA ROCHE, François BAUCERON, Jacob DEMARSAC dit DELONTROU,[50] André BOMBARDIER dit PASSE-PARTOUT. One characteristic linking these marriages is the huge number of soldiers who were witnesses.

We know the names of other expedition members – those contracted to work as servants by Lamothe CADILLAC, or who went as 'migrants': Jacques MAZERET, Jacques DE-MOULIN, Jean-Baptiste DAZY, Mathurin MANDIN, Guillaume AUDIBERT, Ygnace VIEN, Dominique DUBOR, Jacques and Louis MORICEAU, Jean BRUGNON dit LAPIERRE, Pierre COLLET, Pierre BOURDON, Laurent LEVEILLE, Paul, Jean and Robert CHEVALIER, Claude MARTIN, Pierre-Robert-Maximilien DEMERS, Louis DUVAL, as well as Paul and Jean LESCUYER and Jacques MINVILLE, with whom a transport contract for *'horned animals and horses'* was drawn up, Joseph CHABOT who was taken on to build a mill in Detroit, whether a windmill or a watermill we do not know, and finally Louis NORMAN dit LARIVIÈRE, a tool-maker who was going with his wife Anne PRUNET.

The expedition to Detroit lasted for four weeks, with exhausting portages, nights under the stars, no comfort, danger and the complicating presence of cattle.

When they arrived, the new colonists were disappointed; The reality was far from the idyllic picture painted by Lamothe CADILLAC. Thanks to a report written by Governor Rigaud de VAUDREUIL several months later, we have a precise idea of the conditions. *"In Detroit there are only 63 houses instead of the 120 that Cadillac told you about. With regard to the Indians, about 150 huts instead of 1200. The total number of inhabitants is 63 of whom 29 are married soldiers and the others are those who travel in this area but have settled here – their numbers grow every year and they have houses in the fort only for trading purposes. Cadillac is the most important person in Detroit; he alone has 157 acres of land under exploitation whereas all the others together have only 46. There are now 13 cows, 6 or 7 bullocks or calves and 4 horses."*

They had hardly arrived at Fort Pontchartrain than Lamothe CADILLAC had to confront a rebellion. In the course of the brawl, three soldiers and a, small child were massacred by the Outaoiais, and Father DELHALLE, a good friend of Cadillac's, was killed[51]

Moreover Lamothe CADILLAC could feel things going against him. The support which PONTCHARTRAIN had given him was now less than wholehearted, and the Minister was beginning to take seriously the mounting complaints against the Gascon adventurer,[52] who in such a situation had to watch his back. Lamothe did his utmost to accumulate a solid financial cushion; those eligible to vote were hit by new taxes, and the fur-trading increased – to his profit. To that end, François ARDOUIN, of Ville Marie, merchant and manager of the affairs of the 'Master of Detroit' recruited a lot more migrants, beyond those who already had been recruited in June; six in November 1706, among whom was a certain Michael FILIS de THERIGO, chevalier and sergeant of the Marine Troops, 18 in 1707 and another 26 in 1708.

Finally, it seems as if the climate in Detroit was not too healthy. Did all these facts lead Antoine to question the opportunities for settling there? His young wife, brought up in a place that was relatively civilized in contrast to Fort Pontchartrain – did she long for her family, and did she fear for her life? In 1708 Antoine had been in the CFM for 15 years. Engagements were renewable every three years, so he was liable to be demobilized. Could this be the moment to go back to a calmer life, far from the ever-present dangers of far-away postings, despite the end of the Indian Wars? The couple's first child, Pierre, was born in January 1707, a trip to Ville Marie at the end of 1708 was possible and Antoine, as with each soldier 'freed', had the right to a pension equal to a year's pay.

Civilian Life Beckons

So Antoine returned to civilian life. His '*demob*' money probably amounted to about a hundred pounds which would allow him to get started. It is not easy to track him from this point, for several rea-

sons. Firstly our man seems to have had the wanderlust and moved around a lot. Secondly it is likely that the information we need to follow this couple is missing; they were together for a long time and as was usual for the time, had many children. The third reason is that what we do know is often contradictory and does not always hang together.[53]

On the one hand, we have the parish registers which pose few problems and allow us to sketch a complete portrait of the family, its history, the ups and downs – through the births, marriages and burials – and of the way they moved around New France.

On the other, we have some notarized documents which ought to confirm their movements but which are no help at all. Of course there are lots of documents missing from our collection; moreover some of them contradict the data in the parish registers. Certainly the data base *Parchemin* contains in principle all notarized contracts of every description signed under the French *régime*, and which are therefore of interest to us. But some have probably been lost over the centuries. Moreover the spelling of family names was often pure fantasy, as in parish registers elsewhere, but for those, the 'Québec Program for Demographic Research'[54] – which can be found in any good library, and thus easily accessible – provides us with an index which is easy to flick through. To find acts of interest to an individual or to a family in *Parchemin* presupposes that one knows almost all the variations of the name one is looking for, even if the search facility does allow a certain flexibility. All the same, as Antoine was known as TEROU, TERROU, THÉROUX, TEROUX, TEROUS, TERON, TERAU, TEREAU, probably as well as others even more far-fetched, you can see the problem. Research is further complicated by these famous contradictions between parish registers and notarized documents. However, let us deal with these contradictions as they arise.

On 30 September 1708, Antoine signed an agreement to develop about 6 *arpents*[55] of land, belonging to Michel FAVARD, near Trois-Rivières in the domain of Longval.

At Trois-Rivières, where the couple seem to have lived until 1713 or 1714, the parish register records the baptism of Joseph TEREAU on 10 February 1710, the death of Louise TEREAU[56] on 22 July of the same year and the baptism of Marie-Anne TEREAU on 16 February 1712. So in the parish Antoine was known as TEREAU, far enough away from the correct spelling as to make one think it might be someone else, but happily Marguerite LAFOREST is there; her name has not been changed, so we need have no doubts.

As for notarized documents of this period, on 26 March 1713, there is an exchange of 4 arpents of land – worked by Antoine to the south of the river opposite Trois-Rivères in the Seignory of Godefroy on which had been built a small house, a barn and a cowshed indicating a proper exploitation of the land – against a concession worked by Pierre CHASTEL which was near the Yamachiche River, 6 *arpents* wide by 40 long, which seems very big. These *arpents* which are sometimes measures of length and sometimes of area also make things difficult to under-

stand. On 6 June of that year, Antoine resold the land to Philippe CAUCHON for the apparently derisory sum of 30 pounds. In both these acts, signed in the office the lawyer VERON de GRANDMESNIL, he is correctly identified as "Antoine TEROU dit LAFERTE, husband of Marguerite LAFOREST."[57] Etienne VERON de GRANDMESNIL had more reasons than most for being able to identify them, as he knew them already. He was, from 1705 on, the secretary of Lamothe CADILLAC in Detroit before becoming his right-hand man in 1709, and then settling as a lawyer in Trois-Rivères.

From 1714 to 1721 at least, Antoine and Marguerite seem to have lived at Baie St Paul where the parish registers of the church of St Peter and St Paul record the baptisms of Paul LAFERTE on 2 March 1715, Marguerite LAFERTE on 23 June 1717, Marie-Geneviève TEROU on 13 March 1719 and finally André TEROU[58] on 4 March 1721. For the first the mother is Marguerite LAFOREST, for the second she is Marguerite LABRANCHE (her father's nickname) for the third she is again Marguerite LAFOREST and for the last Marguerite LAFORETS Everyone is very easily identified, but to confuse things further there is a document granting to Antoine a piece of land four *arpents* by twenty belonging to Godefroy de TONNANCOUR at Bécancourt on the south bank of the Saint Lawrence. One of his neighbors was his brother-in-law, Thomas LAFOREST. The document was signed in the office of Maitre POULIN and in it Antoine is declared to be a resident of Trois-Rivères.[59]

On 13th February 1724, Antoine received another grant of land at Bécancourt 4 *arpents* by 25 and, using the same lawyer as before, he agreed to pay 290 livres to the previous occupant, Jacques CHRETIEN. He is said to reside in Québec.[60] There is no trace of these lands at Bécancourt being developed,. the last having to be ceded back by Marie FRECHET, Marguerite's half-sister, who had power-of-attorney for her brother-in-law.

In 1724, on 21st May. in the church of the Immaculate Conception, Joseph-Placide the last child of Antoine and Marguerite, was baptized, after which the couple settled in Ile-Jésus at La Pointe-aux- Trembles. On 27 May 1731, Marie-Anne TERROUX married Jean-Baptiste COUTURIER, related to the PAYET-SAINT AMOUR family.[61] They had a still-born son in 1732. On 30 February 1733, after the death of Marie-Anne, Jean-Baptiste and the TERROUX signed an agreement by which the latter renounced as the rights to any property accruing to Jean-Baptiste and Marie-Anne during their married life, as Anne-Marie was *"without issue"* Couturier willed to the TERROUX *"the wearing apparel of Marie Anne and a pewter basin."* 1733 was certainly a black year for the TERROUX; their other daughter Marguerite, 16, died on March 6th . And it did not stop there. On 30 September 1732. Pierre had married Rose COITOU and they had a daughter on 10 October 1733, who died just over a month later on 25 November. Was it to erase this memory that Peter and his wife settled in Yamaska the following year?

On 12 November 1736, Marie-Genevieve married Jean-Baptiste CHRIS-

TIN-ST. AMOUR who lived in Assomption.

The following year Joseph went off to Yamaska where on 4 March 1737 he married Lisette DANY. Unfortunately she died on 30 November that year, leaving a broken-hearted man who did not marry again for 12 years.

While he was living at Ile Jésus, Antoine had become friends with Pierre PAYET dit ST. AMOUR. Pierre was the son of the famous Pierre PAYET, captured by the Iroquois during the fighting at Coulée de Groux; he was adopted by them and lived with them for three years. The names of these two friends can be found together as witnesses to numerous burials registered in the parish of St François-de-Sales at Ile Jésus. Pierre PAYET died on 20 December 1743. It seems that Antoine had no one left in Ile Jésus, on the contrary; most of his children had gone to St. Michel de Yamaska. In 1745, he was granted land by Marguerite VERON,[62] widow of Pierre PETIT, Seigneur of Yamaska; it was *"3 arpents wide on the shores of the river of the said town,"* and going as far as the little river, next to land farmed by Louis COTTENOIRE. Antoine and Marguerite settled in Yamaska for good. From July 1749 events seemed to pile in on one another, as if the whole family knew something was about to happen. On 22 July, Joseph finally got married again... to Anne-Elisabeth COTTENOIRE; on 25 August, Paul married Ursule BREZA; on 19 January 1750, André took Jeanne PELISSIER as his wife, and lastly Joseph-Placide became engaged to marry Agathe PARENTEAU on 9 February. Less than two weeks later, on 22 February 1750, Marguerite LAFOREST died.

Marguerite's estate was wound up on 5 November of that year; Pierre bought his brothers out. Antoine settled his portion on his children on 14 July 1751, with the proviso that they looked after him for the rest of his days.

On 5 February 1753, Marie, Pierre's eldest daughter, married Étienne ST. GERMAIN and Antoine had the rare good fortune, for the times, to know his two great-grandaughters; Marie-Antoine born on 4 February 1754 and Marie-Claire born 6 March 1757. Sadly, his daughter, Marie-Geneviève, died on 17 May 1758. He himself died on 22 February 1759 and was buried in the parish of St. Michel de Yamaska , 83 years after his baptism in the church of St Michel in Verdun.

But life goes on; the THÉROUX family (the settled spelling) would expand and move on at the mercy of events and crises, and eventually extend from the east of Canada to the west, and into the United States.

But that's another story.

Footnotes

[1] We used to think that Verdun was mentioned by the Greek geographer Strabon, writing 2000 years ago. Wrong! Henri has a translation in which Verdun does not figure.

[2] The Canal Royal du Midi, joining Toulouse to the Mediterranean (a brilliant feat of engineering) was finished in 1681; the Canal Latéral de la Garonne (1838 -1856), intended to join Toulouse to Bordeaux, was completed just in time to be overshadowed by the arrival of the railway.

[3] The spelling did not settle down till

much later. There would be innumerable variations, going from Terous to Terroux and Theroux, passing by Terou and even Tero or Teron, as when Antoine arrived in New France.

[4] Guerguy?

[5] The age at which one could legally many at that time was 25, so no question of marrying without parental consent before that age.

[6] Like Alfred Doolittle in 'Pygmalion'!

[7] Probably related to the priest who officiated at Antoine's baptism; the name was in all likelihood Villeneuve, a well-known and well-connected Verdun family

[8] And with his consent

[9] A 'fournier' was the man who in charge of the communal bread ovens.

[10] See note on previous page. Is this person André's godfather, or a close relation?

[11] A material used for household linen.

[12] Paid annually to the 'Seigneur' i.e. the King or other nobleman.

[13] The monetary unit was the livre divided into units of 20 sols, in turn divided into 20 deniers.

[14] In the dictionary, 'marinier' is given as 'bargee', but that really does not cover the population who worked on, or gained their living, from the river. Moreover, barge is probably too grand a word for the sort of boats that plied the Garonne.

[15] The right to fish was a privilege granted by the king and of course, gave rise to payment of an annual fee.

[16] This floor was known as the 'galetas' or garret.

[17] It is a bit of a guess but how else to explain his presence and that of his wife, who was also the child's godmother, at the baptism of Jeanne-Marie TERROUX, (one of the children who did not survive) as well as his intervention at the time of Jeanne's second marriage?

[18] This does not mean he had access to the King, simply that he was his representative as far as tax-collecting goes.

[19] Comberouger is a small village, once fortified, in the Canton of Verdun, about 4 miles from the town.

[20] Canals is a village not very far from Verdun but on the right bank of the Garonne.

[21] The age of majority was 25, but marriage freed minors, and this was enshrined in the Napoleonic Code.

[22] Of wheat, barley and oats, usually used to feed the flocks of fowl ever present in and around a house in the countryside.

[23] In Languedoc that would be about 533 litres so Jeanne would have enough to drink!

[24] The material was 'raze' which was shiny, maybe like satin.

[25] i.e. still growing, not yet ready for harvest.

[26] Toilon' is probably 'poelon'.

[27] It seems as if Nicolas CHAMPIER had other property which he did not put into the joint estate, expecting his natural heirs to look after his widow. This was not necessary as Jeanne predeceased him, on 29th June 1702. She is buried in the church at Comberouger.

[28] In 1710 (July 20th) he obtained for 540 livres (a lot of money at the time) the concession for the crossing place upriver from Grenade; there were no bridges over the Garonne between Toulouse and Bordeaux at this time – to get across there was a sort of ferry, but the right of crossing was a privilege belonging to the King or to the great abbeys as was the case at Verdun. This

privilege was ceded against a rent, to the 'farmers' who undertook to provide the service.

[29] 1686 – an alliance originally consisting of the Holy Roman Empire, Spain, Sweden and several German states joined in 1689 by England, Holland and Savoy which waged war on Louis XIV from 1689 to 1697 to curb his expansionist policies. It was not conclusive and resumed under another name – the War of the Spanish Succession – in 1701

[30] An intendant was a sort of civil servant who represented central government in the provinces

[31] The verb means to swing; in the dictionaries, they give 'hammock' for 'branie' which is hardly helpful!

[32] 'Branie has de combat' – take down the 'branles' and prepare to fight.

[33] My dictionary gives landlubber', but to my mind that is someone who is reluctant to leave dry land; these lads were at least at home on the water.

[34] In a letter to those in charge of sailing matters in Verdun, dated July 1692, the Intendant of Montauban warned the 19 to rejoin the ships that were being armed at Rochefort.

[35] Mazamet, in the department of the Tarn, used to have a flourishing textile industry based on wool, which later diversified into the treatment of animal hides.

[36] The number of sick men was sufficiently high for the bursar of the hospital to register all those soldiers in a register which was separate from the usual one. This document entitled 'Record of the soldiers from France this year 1693 and who stayed because of sickness in the Québec Hospital, with their names, age, then" arrival and departure from the said General Hospital' is a valuable document, as it allows us to date the arrival of the first boat on 14th July 1693, and the arrival of Antoine on 6th August of the same year.

[37] The number who were ill when they arrived was large but not exceptional. When the Carignan Regiment arrived in 1661,130 were hospitalized in a single day.

[38] Frontenac and Champigny complained that some of the 500 soldiers sent to them were too young, In fact among those hospitalized when they arrived were youngsters of 17, 16 and even 15 which gives us a valid sample from which we can draw a solid conclusion. We have good reason to think that Pierre ESTEVE dit JEUNESSE (Youth) whom we find as witness at Antoine's wedding, was on this voyage. He was only 15 at this time.

[39] The sword was useful for guard duty and parades or for fighting against regular troops, but less evidently so during the Indian Wars when the Navy Companies had to fight 'just like the savages' at the side of the Militia Companies whose methods they adopted. It was the Canadian officers who gradually as they took over the Independent Companies, adapted their equipment and fighting style to the realities of a situation which bore no resemblance to the 'lace ruffles'-type war being waged back home.

[40] In the beginning the soldiers of the Independent Companies were given muskets, which was a poor weapon liable to explode when fired. Buccaneer muskets' of better quality replaced them from 1693. The maintenance of these weapons was the responsibility of the Captain of the Company, the King would only replace those arms

that had recently exploded.

[41] During the unavoidable porterage between one river level and another, Frrontenac was carried in triumph in one of the canoes by the 'savages' who admired him.

[42] There's a very good study of this in a book (in French) by Canadian professor Yves Landry, called *Orphelines en France pionnieres au Canada: Les Filles du Roi*, (published by Lemeac in Montréal).

[43] I am much intrigued by the assumption that Michele knew she was pregnant so early; she cannot have much more than a month gone at this time.

[44] This probably indicates the area he came from in France, in and around Charente-Maritime, north of Bordeaux.

[45] In the Côtes-du-Nord.

[46] See note 59.

[47] Lamothe CADILLAC was born 5th March 1568 at Laumets, near Caumoat, about 30 kms from Verdun-sur-Garonne.

[48] The Quercy is an area north ofMontauban whose centre is Cahors, in the Lot.

[49] The Gers is the next-door département to the west, whose eastern boundary is not very far from Verdun.

[50] On 10 March 1707 Jacob DEMARSAC received a plot of land in Detroit from 'Antoine de Lamothe Cadillac, Seigneur of Douaguet and Mont-Desert'.

[51] Relations between Lamothe CADILLAC and the Jesuits were strained to say the least. Also he had chosen a Recollet, Father DELHALLE to be the priest at the fort.

[52] m November 1707, Clairambault DAIGREMONT was sent on an inspection tour and in his report he did not spare Lamothe CADILLAC and his rather personal style of management.

[53] It seems to be largely a question of geography and not being able to be in two places at once.

[54] PRDQ Program de Recherches démographiques de Québec.

[55] According to my dictionary, an arpent is either an acre (French) or one and a half acres (English).

[56] This is Marie-Louise, daughter of Antoine and Michele FORTIN. Whatever may have happened to her mother it seems as if Marguerite LAFOREST was willing to take her under her wing. There is of course a four year gap between 1702 and 1706, and we do not know how long Michele was around after the birth of her daughter to take care other. It seems probable that Antoine had her in his sole charge for a while.

[57] Her godparents were Michel HERTEL and Marie-Françoise-Ursule de GODEFROY de CHAMPLAIN.

[58] Ancestor of Emile Théroux.

[59] Which seems to be a fair step from Bécancourt – if you are going to farm the land, that is.

[60] Again a problem of distance.

[61] See last paragraph this page.

[62] Connected to Etienne the lawyer?

A FEW REASONS TO THINK THE WORLD IS CRAZY

"Life is tough. It's tougher if you're stupid."

Several years ago, we had an Intern who was none too swift. One day she was typing and turned to a secretary and said, "I'm almost out of typing paper. What do I do?"

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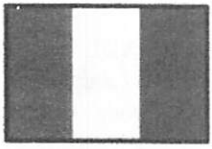

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The Patter of Little Feet

by: Albert Boissonault

Editor's note: The following is taken from the book, Je Me Souviens – A Family Remembrance, *by Albert Boissonneault, and is serialized here with his widow's permission. This is the eighteenth installment in the series. His book is in the AFGS Library.*

We soon discovered that our rooms at the WRIGHTS had one severe drawback, the two flights of stairs between the basement kitchen and the second floor bathrooms. At first we assumed that Ellie's morning dashes up those stairs were due to the change in our life style but when they continued, a medical exam was in the cards. Dr. Stanley DIXON was recommended by Mrs. WRIGHT (who had been a nurse prior to her marriage) and he gave us the glad news that there would be a new Boissonneault come January. Dr. DIXON was one of those real old-time family doctors who have been lost along the wayside. He delivered our children and nursed us through various illnesses over the years until his death in 1975.

The news about the coming baby made it urgent for us to find an apartment. We had put our name on countless waiting lists and in October we finally obtained an apartment at West Springfield Gardens on the second floor at 1582 Memorial Avenue, West Springfield. The apartment had four small rooms but it was large enough for us because we did not have too much furniture. We owned a bedroom set that Ellie had purchased before she was married (and which we are still using), as well as the living room pieces and kitchen set that we had purchased in Jamaica Plain. When we had them moved to West Springfield, we settled into our new apartment.

After Ellie fixed it up, it was pretty cozy and living there, in those days, was quite good. There were five or six other mail clerks living there with their families, and most of them were, like us, from other parts of the state. Ellie's temporary job had ended in September and with a baby on the way, she did not look for another. Facing her first pregnancy away from friends and family, it was nice for her to be able to visit and learn from others in the same boat.

West Springfield Gardens was across the street from the Eastern States Exposition grounds; it has now been turned into condominiums under the name of Wentworth Estates. Bus service was available and I used the bus to go to work and took a bus home around midnight. Ellie could go in to Springfield whenever she wanted to. For entertainment we had the TV set, (though the

shows were still few and far between) and on my nights off we went to the movies. Springfield had about seven or eight movie houses so the programs changed quite often. Main Street boasted of two large department stores, Steiger's, and Forbes & Wallace, a smaller one – Poole's, Woolworth's, Johnson's Bookstore, and various other assorted merchandisers. There were plenty of reasons to go downtown.

Alan Edward arrived a month earlier than he was expected, on Tuesday night, December 11, 1951 at Ludlow Hospital, Ludlow, Mass. It was a frank breech birth, very difficult for both mother and child. Because of Dr. DIXON's extensive experience, he was able to save both of them, although it was rough going at first. About 12 days later Ellie and the baby came back to our West Springfield Gardens apartment. Christmas Day that year would have been a lonely one for us, being separated from our families on such a day. Happily, Ellie's Aunt Ruth drove up from Stamford, CT, accompanied by her fiance Bill REILLY and Ellie's grandmother, and carrying a completely cooked Christmas dinner in an electric oven, turkey and all the fixings. Believe me, it was enjoyed by all because Ellie was not up to doing much cooking. I shall always be thankful to her aunt for her kindness and consideration.

Not much happened in the beginning of 1952. I continued working at the Post Office and at home we were busy with our new son. The long trips to Boston were out for the winter and remained few in the spring, since Ellie was nursing Alan and travel was not easy. We hoped to spend a few days there on vacation but before then, on July 31, my stepmother Grace called and said that my father had died. He was 65 years old and had managed to see Alan and hold him on his knee only twice. I was very saddened by his death because he never had much pleasure out of life. When my mother became ill he was 29 years old and had three small children to worry about. Until she died four years later, he struggled alone to take care of us as best as he could. His own family did not raise a hand to help him, even though his father could have given him financial help. His children were separated and his wife spent a great deal of time in sanatoriums and hospitals, but somehow he carried on. He worked long hours in order to pay all his extraordinary expenses.

When he was living, I did not have the money to do much for him. Before I married I was able to give him two trips to Rochester, NY to visit my sister Edith, and of course while I worked in the chocolate factory, I kept him well stocked with chocolates which he loved. He was one great guy, I owe him a lot.

In August, 1952. Aunt Ruth and Bill REILLY were married and we went to Stamford for the wedding. The next day, Ellie and I went to New York to watch the American Legion Convention parade while Ellie's grandmother baby sat for Alan. It was a great outing for us as we did not have a babysitter at home. It was almost five years after the parade at which we had met; what changes our lives had undergone during those years! During 1952 I finally became a regular sub in the Post Office and I was able to earn annual leave and accumulate sick leave. Of course we had no

money to go anywhere but Arlington for a week or sol And so we come to another family highlight, the year 1953.

On June 3 of that year. our family expanded with the birth of David Frederick in Ludlow Hospital, happily with no complications this time. Our small apartment could hold two cribs but we needed a larger home before Alan had to move to a bed. In October our lease was up and we moved to 365 Springfield Street, Agawam, where we had purchased a two family house at a price of $13,000. We had sold the house in Jamaica Plain to Al and Gay SOUZA for what we paid for it. This left us with only $700 for a down payment. Even though we had a rent coming in to help with the mortgage payments and the taxes, we still had only enough money to squeeze by. There always seemed to be some small unforeseen repairs cropping up, usually inexpensive, but always a strain on our very tight budget. Even so, the house was a definite improvement on our previous tight quarters. We now had five large rooms, and an extra lot of land in the back where the boys would be able to play when they were older.

There was little money for new clothes or hairdos for Ellie but she never complained. We had budget envelopes and on my semi-monthly paydays we would split the money up in various funds. On rare occasions we could spare enough to hire a baby sitter and take in a movie. I worked the afternoon shift from 3:00 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. so Ellie was alone with the kids a good part of the time. Luckily we had a TV set and that served as our normal entertainment. Once in awhile I would get a Sunday off and she would be able to attend church at St. David's Church a short distance up the street from our house. Because of our budget we never owed any money but we did without nearly everything but the necessities. Our menu was heavy with hamburgers and hot dogs, spaghetti and stews. Looking back, I have to admit that we were happy. The two kids were healthy, as a matter of fact we all were – except for Ellie, who had a terrible rash on her fingers. How she managed to get all her work done with those fingers, I will never know. I know it was very painful and Dr. DIXON did the best he could to cure her. When she began to wear gloves, some relief was obtained but it took a long time to clear up.

One of the nicest features of the Springfield Street house was that we had a large back yard for the children. The boys had a slide and a swing set and a couple of trees to climb in. The lot opened up in the back on a quiet street where they could run around with their friends safely.

During 1954 and 1955 nothing much happened to change our way of life. We struggled day by day, week by week. In August there was a big flood, although it did not affect us directly. The Connecticut and Westfield Rivers both overflowed and it was especially bad where Dunkin Doughnuts is now. Ellie had kept in touch with a couple of her WAC buddies and we were babysitting for one of them, who had gone on a camping trip with her husband. While they were on the way home, the flood hit and they were marooned in Winsted, Connecticut, with no way to get word to us for several days. For awhile we thought that we had adopted another

son but eventually the bridges were opened and they reached home safely.

In 1956 on Tuesday, the 28th of August, Roger Albert was born at Ludlow Hospital. He, like the other two was a good baby, although he suffered from asthma. But with Ellie's good care and feeding us all vitamins every day, we were remarkably healthy. We felt very fortunate at having Roger. Ellie had suffered a miscarriage in 1955 and when she became pregnant with Roger, had some problems during the first months of her pregnancy. We were then living on the second floor of our house and renting the first floor. The doctor ordered her not to climb any stairs so she was forced to spend most of her time at home during her pregnancy. As soon as the downstairs tenants moved out, we moved to the first floor ourselves. Ellie wanted to make sure that she was never imprisoned on the second floor again! The restrictions proved to be well worthwhile; after his two six pound brothers, Roger was a healthy eight and one half pound giant!

Things went along on an even keel for the next several years. The boys started school and I finally had enough seniority to go on the day shift. The one dark spot on the horizon were the illnesses of Ellie and Alan. Ellie became ill with a rare disease, lupus erythmatosis, and for some time she was confined to her bed. Ellie's mother came up and stayed with us for awhile but the rest of the time she and the boys managed to get along by themselves until I came home from work. Eventually she recovered, but when Alan was eight years old, he became ill with rheumatoid arthritis. For some time he was incapacitated and Ellie had to carry him as he was unable to walk. Thanks to her and Dr. DIXON's good care, he suffered no permanent damage from his illness.

In 1963, things began to change for the better. I had applied to the Internal Revenue Service and was accepted by that branch. Although our financial circumstances did not improve until I had been there some time and moved up in grade, it was a more interesting job. The IRS office had a wonderful supervisor, Mert TOLMAN, and the whole group was more like a family than a cold-hearted bureaucratic organization. We are still close to most of those with whom I worked in the IRS.

In 1967, Ellie went to work for the Postal Service as a pan-time clerk. She had previously worked part-time at Forbes & Wallace Department Store (now out of business) but the Post Office paid much better. Alan was then old enough to watch over the other two boys until I got home from work, as she had to leave at 3:00 p.m. and I did not get home until 5:00 p.m. Her salary made a big difference; for the first time we felt able to rent a beach vacation cottage, (at Point Judith, RI). The boys were also able to have a backyard swimming pool and other small luxuries.

Over the years we had grown tired of tenants and had used the whole house for our family, with the boys sleeping upstairs. As they became older and ready to leave home, we knew that it would soon become too big for us. We found a ranch home in a wooded area a mile away and purchased the home at 9 Pasadena St. in 1972. There we are still living and enjoying the quiet life!

Grandmère Roger – and Her Obit

by: Lorraine Durling

Editor's note: The subjects of this article are pictured on the back cover of this issue.

I always thought that saving obituaries was a rather morbid thing to do until I started to do genealogy. I didn't realize before that obituaries contained so much valuable information for researching family history.

When I decided to do research on my family I started with my maternal lies of LAMBERT/ROGER(S). The only information I had was that my grandparents were both born in Canada, lived in Connecticut before coming to Warren, RI, where they settled and lived out the rest of their lives.

I knew that Dr. FORGET had done extensive work on the early families of Rhode Island and that the AFGS had his files. I thought surely he must have made mention of my grandparents in his work as he was often a guest of the ROGERS family but my search of his files revealed nothing. I then searched the *Blue Drouin* and all the AFGS had on Connecticut and I still found nothing. Since my mother and several of her siblings were born in Baltic, CT, I wrote to the town clerk on a hunch that they might have been married there.

The reply soon came and they were indeed married there in 1878 but it only verified what I already knew, that they were born in Canada. No parents were listed.

As I pondered several ideas in my mind as to where to look next, I suddenly remembered that my Aunt Lydia had given me my grandmother's obituary when I was very young. Now the question was, had I kept it. One day while looking through a box of old pictures I found it!

Eureka! I was on my way. It contained all the information needed to trace her LAMBERT lineage all the way into France.

Grandmère ROGER was born Marie-Louise LAMBERT on 22 March 1860 in St. Guillaume d'Upton, Yamaska, Québec. She was the daughter of David LAMBERT and Emélie DUGUAY. She came to Connecticut in 1864 when she was only four years old. She married Samuel-Rémi ROGER in Baltic on 25 December 1878. In 1885 they came to live in Warren, RI with their six children: Henri, Noelia, Emma, Medora and Lydia. Three more children were born in Warren: Béatrice, Émile and Alonzo.

The obituary not only gave my

statistical information but also personal information. It stated that "Mrs. Rogers was a woman who was devoted to her family, giving them every care and thought possible and it is here in the home where the loss will fall heaviest but she too was a kind neighbor, a loving friend and a woman of devout character."

The obituary also listed her surviving siblings: Auguste LAMBERT of Danielson, CT; Thomas LAMBERT of Taftville, CT; François LAMBERT of New Bedford and Mrs. Joseph JODOIN of Taftville, CT.

My grandmère ROGER died on 9 May 1920 while visiting a sick neighbor. As she handed her a bouquet of lilacs, she collapsed and died.

This happened several years before I was born. I often wish I had known her and I especially think of her every spring when the lilacs are in full bloom.

The obituary was published in the *Warren and Barrington Gazette* of 11 May 1920.

LIFE'S TRUTHS

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

Gardening Rule: When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.

Never take life seriously. Nobody gets out alive anyway.

There are two kinds of pedestrians – the quick and the dead.

Life is sexually transmitted.

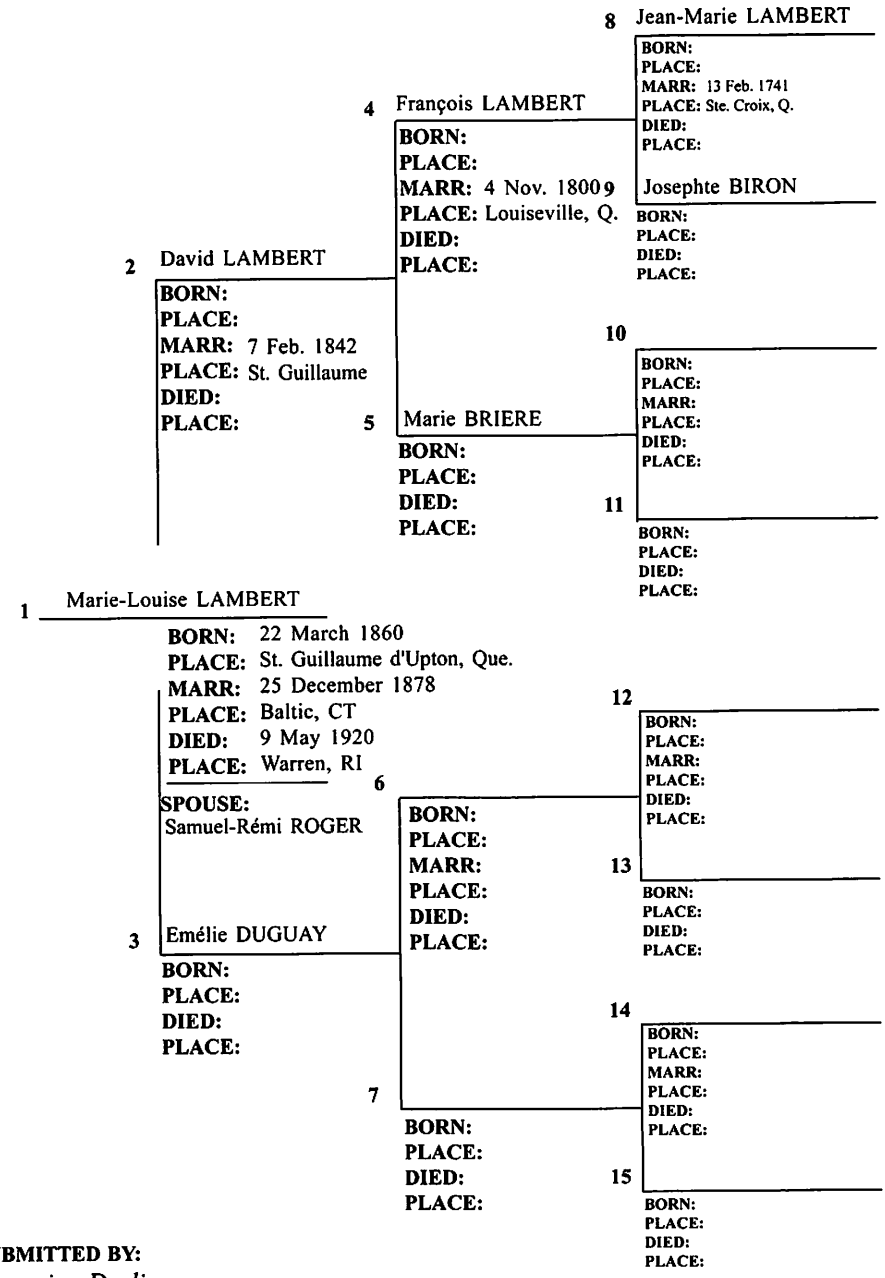
An unbreakable toy is useful for breaking other toys.

If quitters never win, and winners never quit, then who is the fool. who said, "Quit while you're ahead?"

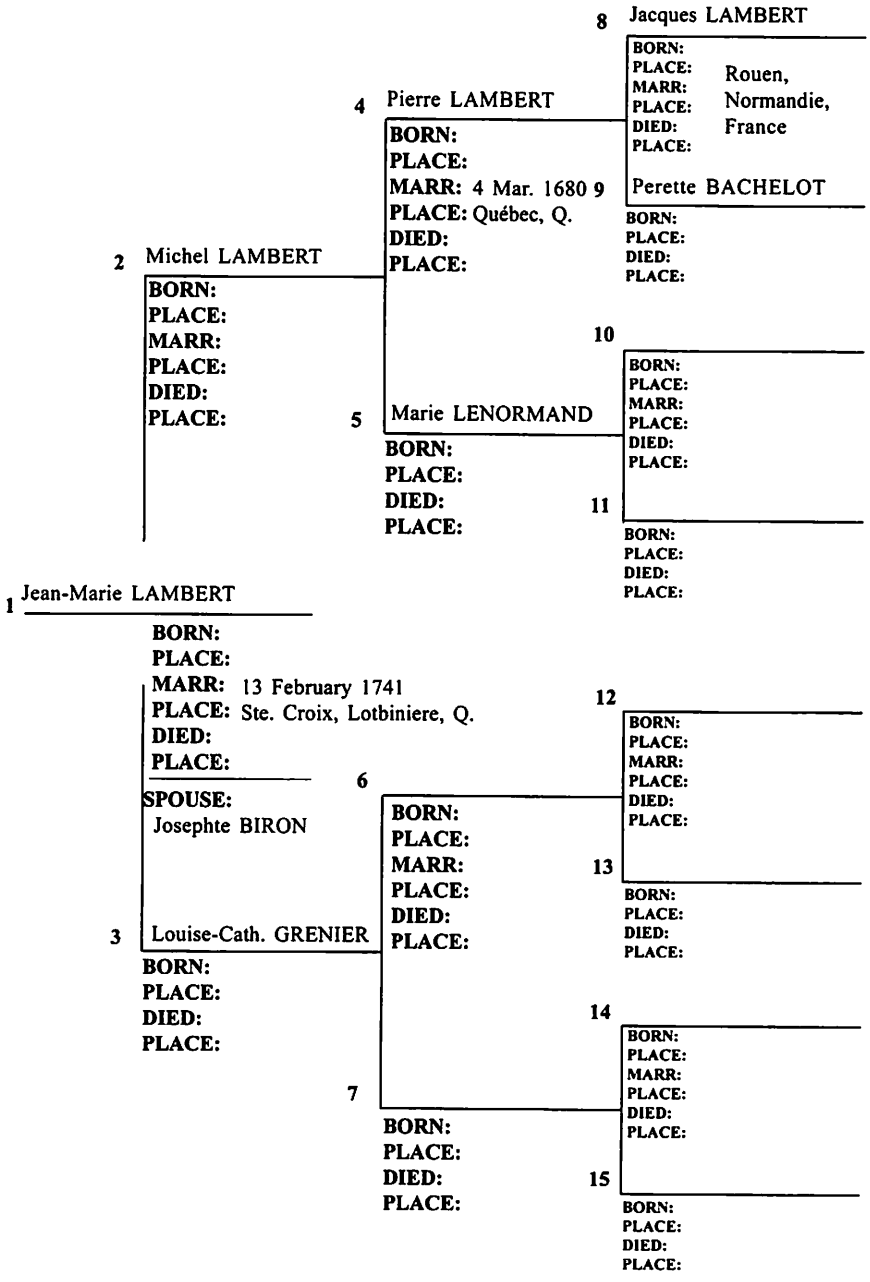
Health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.

Always get the last word in: Apologize.



SUBMITTED BY:
Lorraine Durling


8 Jacques LAMBERT
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4 Pierre LAMBERT
Perette BACHELOT
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2 Michel LAMBERT
10
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5 Marie LENORMAND
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1 Jean-Marie LAMBERT
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Josephte BIRON
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3 Louise-Cath. GRENIER
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The Latour Dit Forgit Family in New England

by Roy F. Forgit

Antoine LATOUR dit FORGET and his son, Joseph, 1802-1873

The original land-fiefs, termed *rotures* at Ste. Elisabeth were frontages along the Bayonne River, whose two western branches converge there. The terrain is very flat, a prairie, and the rivers and streams meander. In his 1815 topographical study, BOUCHETTE discusses these waterways: "The rivers Chicot, the Chaloupe, Bayonne, and the creek Bonaventure, a branch of the latter,...provide a convenient and level irrigation; the first is navigable for boats as far as the mill of the Seigneur, about two leagues, but the other two for only a mile or two to their mouths. Close to the Bayonne is a source very heavy with salt, the water of which one drinks little and some- times makes of it very good quality salt."[1]

The salt spring would be the property of the Seigneur, as he reserved to himself all natural resources. The mill is where the *habitants* took their wheat or rye to be ground into flour, for a fee, payable again to the Seigneur. He also owned a communal oven, where bread was baked.

Wheat was a main source of income to these farmers at the time of his travels about the Berthier *seigneurie*, and BOUCHETTE also discusses the agricultural basis of business life at the start of the 19th century: "The village of Berthier is agreeably situated on the north of the North Channel, and forms a main street composed of at least 80 houses, although they are sometimes located at long intervals on the coast of the Grand Route of Quebec; many are extremely good structures and very beautiful. There are beyond the homes, a great number of granaries and of stores for all kinds of merchandise, this place being one location of commerce, of where the sellers of English products distribute them to the populated *seigneuries* of the local area, and where they export also each year a large quantity of grain."[2]

Essentially, the farmers were required to trade their crops for British goods as trade with France was prohibited for the most part. Other limitations on the economic life of the *habitants* would lead to petitions to the King and the English-dominated Governor's Council at Québec, but to little avail. By the fourth decade of the 19th century, 1837-38, violence would result.

These changes in the commercial life of Québec were among the many attributable to English control of shipping and credit since the Conquest. As

CORBETT explains the economic plight of the French Canadians of the time: "Few had adequate means to adapt to new conditions of trade, the others soon learned they could expect little assistance from London suppliers or bankers."[3]

Still, the way of life on the farms about Ste. Elisabeth, at least in the first quarter of the 19th century went on undisturbed. This was due chiefly to the fact that they were still basically self-sufficient: "Almost every *habitant* raised peas, oats, and barley. Peas were always a dietary staple....Oats was raised for feed, as was the small quantity of barley grown on most farms, although whenever the wheat harvest failed, barley bread appeared on many tables. Some *habitants* planted a little rye. Corn, the mainstay of agriculture in the Indian villages of the colony, was not popular with the *habitants* who apparently were little more fond of it than of potatoes ...which they would not grow."[4]

One other traditional crop was a coarse-leaf Canadien tobacco, which was viewed as too pungent by most seigneurs, who grew a milder Virginia strain. Usually, a farmer had a tobacco patch in his garden, but in a corner away from the kitchen-food crops of cabbages, onions, beets, and carrots.

Boys as young as ten or twelve often smoked, as did most adults. While the LATOURs missed out on claiming the first baby to be baptized in the new parish of Ste. Elisabeth, they did have the second, as on the very beginning page of the brand new register, dated 14-*janvier*-1802, we find Magdeleine LATOUR. She was born on the 12th, daughter of Joseph LATOUR dit FORGET and Genèviève PETTIER dite ANTAYA.

The first LATOUR wedding of note in the new parish is that of Antoine LATOUR dit FORGET and Marie-Victoire ASSELIN on January 14,1805. He was the fourth son of Pierre-Simon LATOUR and Louise FRICHET, and was then age 23 and a farmer. His bride was the daughter of Louis ASSELIN and Louise PAQUET, who were natives of the parish of Sainte-Famille (Holy Family) at Ile d'Orleans, but now residents of Ste. Elisabeth. The priest who heard their vows was good old Father POUGET, who evidently served both Berthier and the new mission church.

Present for the ceremony was Pierre-Simon, father of the groom, who signed the parish register in large script. (He was the John HANCOCK of the LATOURS, always a big signature.) Also in attendance were the father of the bride and her brother, Louis ASSELIN, whom the priest duly notes *"ne savoir ecrire"*. It was common then for these rural people to be illiterate. We should take note that the groom's other witness, his brother, Jean-Baptiste was not a signatory, either.[5]

Education for these rural families was usually unavailable: "The rudimentary educational system which had existed under the French regime had been disrupted by the Conquest, and for several decades there was practically no organized instruction. As a result, the vast majority of the French-speaking population at the turn of the century was 'illiterate'."[6]

A different situation is presented in the writings of BOUCHETTE, who

seems to contradict CORBETT by claiming that the Berthier *seigneurie* had four schools, two of which were operated by Catholic clergy. We would believe the account of BOUCHETTE published in 1815 which addresses this specific area over that of CORBETT who spoke in general of the province.

An interesting aside here is to record that the *Seigneur*, James CUTHBERT, had sent his three sons to be educated in France, at a Jesuit college. He wished for them to be fluent in French and in the Laws of France: *"Le droit civil français encore en usage au Québec."* This to enable them to administer the family properties in Canada. Their names were James, Ross, and Edward and they would be active in legislative matters and in public careers in the province. We can admire, in view of the legal storms to rage soon, how very prescient this *Seigneur* was.

Antoine and Victoire had ten children, as best our research could find, but others were probable. Among these is Joseph, our great-great-grand-father. We will count his progeny below. However, to organize the families at Ste. Elisabeth we have made up a chart for this parish.

This brings us to the subject of large families among the *habitants*, as there is more to it than simply the urging of their priests. There was the duty to be faithful to the mission of *"La Survivance"*, which was the preservation of the French-Canadian heritage. This is what required "The Revenge of the Cradle". It was the sole method of maintaining population parity with the flood of Anglophones, English-speaking immigrants from England, Ireland, Scotland, and even America following the 1776 Revolution.

Many authors have debated when this phenomenon began to be seen, or at least to have become consciously de rigueur , a rule to be followed by the vast majority of Canadiens. It would find public ridicule, especially in the late 19th century in New England where the French-Canadians were termed "un-assimilable" into American society.

The historian Ronald A. PETRIN sees the origins of a mission of survival in WOLFE's defeat of the French under MONTCALM at Québec in 1759. He writes : "For the *Canadiens* the Conquest of Canada meant that they would remain a subjugated people for at least a century. Within Québec they created an insulated, rural, and militantly French Catholic culture. Proud of their French heritage and resentful of their English rulers, generation after generation resisted assimilation." [7]

Inevitably, the loss of all ties to the mother country would change the lives of the *habitants*, as well as those of their descendants. But increasingly the legal acts of the British against a population too large to forcefully remove from the land as they had done at *l'Acadie* in 1755 would result in some responses. Since their new government used economic policy as a weapon, the *Québecois* adopted passive resistance, with only a few exceptions. This can be summarized as three reactions:

1. A retreat to farming, since barred from trades and mercantile business,

2. An ethnic mission of survival, thus a closed society,

3. An attempt to achieve parity of their numbers with *"les anglais."*

In the quiet village on the Bayonne, all of these actions can be seen. The five generations of LATOURs, if we count Honoré also, would farm and raise large families. No marriages outside the ethnic tradition are ever found, nor any, certainly, outside the Catholic faith. If any one of them spoke a language other than French, we are unaware of it.

However, Canada was experiencing rapid population expansion westward, leaving the villages of their *seigneurie* behind in both a figurative and a literal sense. Just as the Erie Canal in western New York allowed a vast migration to Ohio and beyond, the Lachine Canal near Montréal which opened in 1825 allowed Ontario to be rapidly populated. By the end of the 1830's Upper Canada (Ontario) had 480,000 people, while Lower Canada (Québec) counted 750,000, of which just over 500,000 were French-speaking.

A vivid and colorful account of that era is presented by CREIGHTON: "...Lower Canada was comparatively immune from the good and bad effects of this mass population movement from Great Britain. In the summer, of course, the poverty-stricken immigrants filled the old towns of Québec and Montréal to suffocation, crowding every inch of the taverns, immigrant shelters, and hospitals, filling the ill-paved, ill-lighted streets with their quarrels and drunken merriment, and thrusting the problems of their poverty and disease upon a community which was totally unprepared to cope with them. A few of these newcomers found farms in Lower Canada on the territories which the British American Land Company had secured, and others, chiefly Irish, remained in Montréal and worked in the construction of the St. Lawrence canals. But the main body of the migration pressed tumultuously through Lower Canada, leaving only few and scattered detachments behind it, and French-Canadian society was never disorganized to the same extent as were other colonial communities by this thunderous invasion from overseas."[8]

Essentially then, it could be claimed that *"La Survivance"* was succeeding! The population of Québec would grow 400% between 1794 and 1844, a half-century. However, in the lower province farms were being overly sub-divided. Soon human fertility would surpass that of the land, and emigration would become a necessity. In truth, the larger threats to survival of their ethnic culture originated in geographic and economic factors, rather than the perceived ones of religious and ethnic prejudices alone.

Long before any crises, the *habitants* were seeking to acquire more and newer lands, but encountered legal and political obstacles. Two examples of such were:

1. The Canada Trade Act of 1822 which contained provisions allowing for voluntary commutation of the tenure of lands held *"en seigneurie"*, which went unused, being inequitable, and,

2. the 1825 charter given to the British American Land Company to settle the Crown lands. It excluded the use of the traditional French legal land contracts, thus barring the *Québecois*.[9]

The real reason why the provisions in item number one above were ignored was that only the *habitants* wanted changes. The seigneurs did not, as under the British legal system they enjoyed a greater degree of profitability and control than before the Conquest. Many had raised rates on the *rotures* without regard to the original contracts, and the tenants were helpless in appeals. As explained by MUNRO, who cites the problem of the tenants under the British system of courts, the King's Bench, as opposed to before 1760: "...litigation was very much more expensive, and, although the *habitant* might in theory still claim the protection of the courts against illegal seigneural exactions, he was in most cases debarred from doing so by his comparative poverty." [10]

In 1825 the British Parliament made a second attempt to revise the legal basis for commutation of seigneural holdings. The Canada Trade and Tenures Act required that the seigneurs be bound to allow their *habitants* to secure a commutation when they did, for a "just and reasonable amount." This legislation, too, failed in its purpose as it was not realistic in valuing property. It allowed buy-outs for as little as 5% of the value. Consequently, by 1833 two cases only had been recorded of tenures ended: Ste. Anne-de-la-Perade and Beauharnois.

But the voices of these tenant farmers were heard in one major forum, that of the French-speaking assembly, termed the Lower House, which the Québecois controlled by their majority vote. In 1834, it adopted the Papineau Resolutions, 92 in number, calling for the Repeal of the 1825 Act. Now the antagonisms grew between this body and the English-speaking Governor, his appointed Council, and the Upper House. A climax was reached in 1836 when the Lower body refused to appropriate moneys for the administration of the government. In London, Parliament issued a statement of Resolve in 1837 that should no compromise be made , it would curtail the authority of the Canadian Lower House. That body refused, and Parliament dissolved this elected legislature, pushing Canada to the brink of civil war.

The spring of 1838 saw the two Canadas in a precarious situation, with many urging a repeat of 1776's actions in the American colonies. An air of defeat, apathy and seething discontent filled the country. The Constitution of Lower Canada had been suspended, a lack of funds meant a halt to all public works, the jails were full of political prisoners, shipping on the great St. Lawrence was at a standstill. Worse still, the cities were in a lawless state and crowds of angry workers clashed with other assemblages of Loyalists. Discouraged and down-trodden farmers were leaving both provinces for the United States.

Lest these conditions be thought to exist solely in Québec, one has only to read CREIGHTON's writings on the province of Ontario: "The Upper Canadian radicals hated the Church of England and its close relations to the state, its efforts to control education, and its exclusive claims to the Clergy Reserves... To them such corporations as the Bank of Upper Canada and the Welland Canal Company were 'abominable engines of state' which corrupted

government and oppressed the people. They hated the whole land-granting policy of Upper Canada-the system of crown reserves, of Clergy Reserves, of large grants to privileged individuals, which stood like uninhabited islands in the midst of general cultivation and blocked the whole development of the province. In the Huron Tract,... there was deep discontent with the policies of ... the Canada Company; and Colonel Talbot,... the owner of an enormous property, was denounced as a local despot 'whose power is infinitely more to be dreaded than that of the King of Great Britain.' "[11]

Following a study by the Earl of Durham, who conducted a tour of the two provinces in 1838, then adopted others' ideas in his famous Report, the British Parliament passed the 1841 Act of Union. This legislation abolished the Province of Québec. This was at a time when the French-speaking population was still a majority in that lower province, but was made a minority by the merger of the two Canadas. This was seen by many as nakedly prejudicial to democratic ideals, and adjudged such: "With the obvious intention of neutralizing the French-Canadian majority in the new united province, the old Lower Canada.... was given the same representation in the assembly as Canada West. This open violation of representation by population was to cause trouble in the future."[12]

These political maneuvers were designed to provide authority for uprooting the major remaining legal entity that was a legacy of the old French regime in Canada, namely the land system. It was seen as a bulwark of the *habitants'* successful preservation of their ethnic culture, despite being surrounded by English-speaking authorities, whom they ignored in large part. In fact this last reserve of independence rankled the British to no end.

The beginnings of the end of the seigneurial system were no doubt well discussed on the farms at Ste. Elisabeth, as the LANAUDIERE family member who had relinquished the *Seigneurie de La Perade* resided in the "next door" *seigneurie* of Lanoraie. However, the wealthy Cuthbert families who held the Berthier areas were refraining, as they most likely feared any premature discussions of yielding their profitable land holdings.

Certainly, on their regular trips to Berthier to sell crops or buy supplies, Antoine and his sons would learn the latest news on many such vital topics. We'd expect, too, that they would watch the tall sailing ships on the St. Lawrence. Those bound down-river usually carried flour and timber, the vessels fighting the powerful currents to reach Montréal carried human cargoes.

There's a possibility also that they made family horse-carriage rides there, in hopes of viewing some of the earliest steam vessels. In 1809, only two years after Fulton's success with his steamship, the Clermont, on a run from New York to Albany, John MOLSON's Canadian-built steamer, the Accommodation, made the up-river run from Québec to Montréal.[12]

While armed uprisings occurred in 1837-38, notably the Patriots' Rebelion at Saint-Denis-sur-Richelieu

below Montréal, but also at Montgomery's Tavern on Yonge Street about four miles north of Toronto, these ended in defeat and humiliation. The rebel leaders, PAPINEAU in Lower Canada and MacKENZIE in the upper province, would flee but others were tried and executed.

Meantime, the lives of the FORGETs remained centered on the farm, the family, and the altar. Sundays and Holy Days saw them traveling the *Rang de la Riviere Bayonne Sud*, the village road where stood the church of Ste. Elisabeth, with its cemetery behind it.

There in 1833 they held the funeral of Pierre-Simon LATOUR dit FORGET, the family patriarch, who died at age 88. His life had spanned tumultuous events in history, and being literate he was no doubt the most respected for an ability to relate and interpret them to other family members.

The following year, on 12 August 1834 our great-great-grandfather, Joseph, married Esther BARIL. Their vows were made in the presence of the bride's father, Louis BARIL, and Pierre LATOUR, whom we assume is the older brother of the groom, whose parents are stated as being Antoine LATOUR dit FORGET and the deceased Victoire ASSELIN. Joseph is a *cultivateur*, a farmer. The priest, Father L.M. BRASSARD, lists two other witnesses as well, Michel SYLVESTRE and Marie MINVILLE. The question of the senior Antoine's absence is an intriguing one. Why was he absent? Surely his health was fine, as just five months later he himself would marry a second time. At the age of 53, on January 13,1835, Antoine would wed Adélaide MARTEAU and go on to father at least two more children.[13]

The union of Joseph and Esther would produce a son within a short time: Joseph-Henri LATOUR arrived on 7 May 1835 to be baptized by Father BRASSARD on the 8th of May. His godfather was Antoine LATOUR dit FORGET, godmother Elisabeth REMILLARD, who was also his maternal grandmother. The same priest baptized a baby girl, Emerance-Sarrasin, just two months later, on 8 July 1835. But it would be a different priest, Father DESEVES, who on 18 July 1837, baptized Honoré, the second-born of Joseph and Esther.

While such vital records serve to confirm that the family members are still engaged in farming their *rotures*, other signs of the soon-to-arrive Industrial Revolution are being seen just a relatively few miles away. Canada's first railroad, 12 miles in length, opened in May 1836, to by-pass the rapids on the Richelieu River. The line ran from St. Jean-sur Richelieu northward to La Prairie, opposite Montréal. In effect it took away the importance of Sorel as a port on the St. Lawrence, and was to forebode a similar fate for the old port at Québec City. Called the Champlain and St. Lawrence Railway, the pioneering line would become part of the first line to be planned as a through route, a Canada to the U.S. railroad, instead of simply a portage.[14]

A Maine lawyer, John A. POOR, was soon to engage Alexander T. GALT, of the British American Land Company, in a scheme to connect Portland to Montréal by rail, providing the latter city with a year-round port. In 1848 the Ca-

nadian half was begun. It was named the St. Lawrence and Atlantic, while the U.S. half was termed the Atlantic and St. Lawrence. Opened in 1853, the two railways met at Norton Mills on the Vermont border, just to the south of Sherbrooke. The juncture was 149 miles from Portland, and this 292-mile rail link became Canada's route to the sea.[15] It must be said that their line was not the very first to link Montréal to a U.S. port, as by the late 1840's it was possible by making numerous connections to reach both Boston and New York, but at the cost of high track-use fees.

Just as in New England, the entrepreneurs of Canada's early Industrial Revolution sought the rights to water-power on the small rivers. Although the Bayonne, due to its level plain, offered little prospect of great vertical drop to power a water wheel, one nearby river did. This was Riviere de L'Assomption, which runs a course through the neighboring *seigneurie* of Lanoraie. It was there that a Berthier native son, Barthélemy JOLIETTE, would erect several mills. Born in 1789, he had married well, when on 27 September 1813 at Lavaltrie he took Marie-Charlotte TARIEU as his wife. She was the daughter of the Seigneur de Lavaltrie, Charles TARIEU de LANAUDIERE. An aggressive businessman, Joliette would bring the first railroad to the area before mid-century, making the village on the L'Assomption which now bears his name into a small city, connected by rail to Montréal's port.

Since Ste. Elisabeth was situated closer to Joliette than to the older Berthierville port, it grew as well, and by the mid-1800's it boasted a population of near 5,000 and had employment available in foundries and brick-mills. It had at one time five inns welcoming visitors.

The busy old river-port of Berthierville described by BOUCHETTE in 1815 was in decline by mid-century. It had lost importance for the same reason that the *habitants* were losing their livelihood as farmers, namely that the huge wheat ranches in Ontario were more productive and efficient. They had larger acreages and more modem milling methods. Canals, then railroads, brought the flour to Montréal where it was loaded directly onto ocean-going steamships.

Returning our attention to the political scene, in 1843 a commission to study the "problem" of the seigneurial system had been appointed by Governor BAGOT.[16] The three members, BUCHANAN, TASCHEREAU and SMITH, issued a conclusion that the legislature should enact laws pursuant "to the complete extinction of the seigneurial system of tenure." Their biased report was in effect to sound the death knell for the Québecois' land holdings as *rotures*. MUNRO, in his history of that era, would state: "...the report of 1843 breeds suspicion by the very violence of its antagonism to the system."[17] This same author provides examples of the language in the report, e.g.: "in many respects vicious and productive of extreme injury", and that it (referring to the seigneurial tenure) "paralyzes the whole country by its influence." The commission's report would soon be circulated in England's newspapers, as well as those of Canada.

In 1845, an act was passed in the provincial legislature, legalizing op-

tional commutation of tenure *en roture* into that of *franc aleu roturier*, which was in legal terms the most similar to free and common socage, which is the British legal version of land ownership. (Now we see why the sons of *Sieur* Cuthbert needed to study law![18]

By 1847 the above act was amended, but the two simply provided that the *habitant* "might arrange" with his seigneur to commute his feudal dues and services for a lump sum to be mutually set. It intended the retention of French legal rules on inheritance. Little progress was seen under the provisions of these two laws, and acrid debates continued.

Finally, in 1854 the British Parliament took actions of its own. It repealed both of the above laws and made abolition of the old system compulsory! A commission was to set valuations on every *seigneurie* and on the lands of each and every *habitant*. The Commission members visited every one, held hearings, and made decisions on worth. However, these could be appealed. For conversions to an annual rent amount, they computed a 14-year average of the value of dues in kind (grain, poultry, etc.).

An indication of how tangled a web of legal tradition held together this "Gordian Knot" was the need to establish, as well, a Special Court of 15 judges to settle disputes of law. These judges had to examine questions of legal precedents in the history of the Custom of Paris (1510), and of various edicts, ordinances, and decrees over three and one-half centuries. It met on 4 September 1855, to consider 46 questions by seigneurs and 30 more by groups of . For an example, such questions as what a *cens* was worth led to a majority opinion that "cens et rentes had never been made uniform in their value.[19]

Thus we know that there exist records of the many LATOUR dit FORGET *rotures* at Ste. Elisabeth, somewhere in the Archives of Québec. Research into them is allowed, but beyond this present effort. There are FORGET families operating farms there even today, on lands inherited since the 1854 end to the feudal system.

An interesting added fact is that there were exemptions to the law requiring compulsory commutation of seigneurial contracts. Several churches were exempted, as well as lands of the Crown, and those held in trust by it for the Indians. Again, political pressures ruled the process.

Who was most hurt by this authoritarian rending of tradition? In terms of monetary losses, the Seigneurs were largely the most adversely affected. They regarded it as unfair that most of their lands *(domaines)* dropped in value. Somehow, it is enigmatic that the British, who defended at the time such large land grants in Ontario to a privileged few of their own upper-class should strip away lands in Québec, which were in many cases held by descendants of British immigrants of the 1760's, such as the CUTHBERTs of Berthier. True, they did not lose all claim to the properties, only the basis for its value.

As for the *habitants*, some gained a measure of respect as true owners of their beloved farms. What they lost was a traditional leader, whom they had fol-

lowed, literally. While most seigneurs were not from nobility, descended rather from soldiers, merchants, and administrators, they were a landed gentry. The people respected them still, just as in 1763 when they had lost all administrative and judicial duties. But some traditional privileges had continued. CREIGHTON gives us a nice summary of such: "The Canadian *Seigneur* had his special pew in church, with his arms above it, and special prayers were offered for him. He was first to receive the Sacraments and first in procession after the priest. The villagers doffed their hats in his presence, and, on New Year's morning, they came early to the manor house and begged his blessing."[20]

Had this feudal system inherited from France been "vicious"? No. It was kinder than the British class system which in the very same era allowed a famine to ravage Ireland, while wealthy estate owners turned a blind eye. No famines struck Québec, although within a generation they would become a real possibility due to government ineptitude and financial scandals. But by then the paternally protective Seigneurs were history.

The year in which our great-grandfather, Honoré, wed Emérance SARAZIN, 1857, was a recession year. This was in part due to over-building of railroads, using very heavy subsidies from the Canadian treasury. These lines were developmental, and often the projected traffic and income was never realized. A prime example was the Grand Trunk, owned by British interests but using Canadian bonds to finance itself. The same Alexander GAIT who built the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railway, discussed above, was in 1857 the Finance Minister of a Tory government which put in new tariffs to pay off government loans, precipitating Canada's Great Depression. Interestingly, the Grand Trunk had by then bought out his S.L.A. railway, which had never realized its potential.[20]

The family would mourn the death of Honoré's father, Joseph, in 1865. He died on January 21st at Ste. Elisabeth, and his burial record tells us that he was still a farmer. And although the priest records his age as 53, we must again correct the record, since we had found his baptism record of 1 October 1812. He was only 52 years, 3 months and 21 days old. This is a relatively short life, but we have no indication that he died accidentally.

Just two months later, on 16 March 1865, a baptism was recorded at St. Charles-Borromée parish of Paul, son of Honoré LATOUR-FORGET and Emérance SARRAZIN. The parents are said to be from St. Paul's parish, which is a puzzler. We can conclude here only that Honoré must have found work outside of Ste. Elisabeth. Was this a direct result of the changes in farm ownership precipitated by the end of the seigneurial era? Or could it have been a result of the change in ownership following the death of his father? One fact is demonstrated, namely that families of a newer generation were more willing to relocate for a better life.

Such stirrings would be one result of the mobility in their society made possible by the new railroads and horse trolleys. By 1860 Canada had over 2,000 miles of railroads, many providing con-

nections to the south. A restless population was on the move, and many were either heading to the new Canadian west or to the booming textile cities of New England.

Political developments were to play a part in this migration as well. Just as in America, the countryside was being emptied of people and the cities were growing rapidly. Both Montréal and Québec City would become majority English-speaking , the first due to an increase of people from the U.K., but the latter because it was losing its *Québecois* population. The old port of Québec was being by-passed because it had no rail connections to the southward. It would be 1917 before a cantilever rail-bridge spanned the St. Lawrence at Cap Diamond, just upstream of Québec City.[22]

Montréal had a rail crossing as early as 1860, when the famous Victoria Bridge opened. Amazingly, even prior to that the Grand Trunk Railroad had a system to lay track on the thick winter ice and ran trains across the river until the spring ice became too thin. In summers they ran a ferry service, which piggybacked the rail cars.[23]

The British-Canadian capitalists of the time were impatient of the fragmented nature of Britain's colonies in North America. They saw the benefits which a union of states gave to the commercial growth of America, and the opening of the west. They coveted the Canadian west, still owned by the Hudson's Bay Company.

In 1867 the Dominion of Canada was born. This new union was the offspring, not of a plebiscite or popular vote, but of the sovereign powers of the British Parliament. The new nation was envisioned to be a British-Empire country, although governed from Ottawa instead of London. Indeed, many believed it to be a defensive political entity, created to protect the Maritime provinces and Québec from overtures by some U.S. interests to annex them as American states, a "Manifest Destiny" movement with very vocal adherents in the U.S. Congress.

When writing of this era, George STANLEY states: "The Canada that had been formed in 1867 was not the outcome of a grass-roots movement...not the product of a strong sense of nationalistic patriotism. It was the achievement of the few, the work of governments, rather than of peoples. "[24]

The few he refers to were the primarily British and British-Canadian politicians, who next proposed laws to impose an Anglican state – church and public schools to be taught in English. Such measures were aimed at the culture and language of the Québecois, to promote assimilation. No U.S.-styled democracy of four basic freedoms was inferred.

The first four members of the new nation were Québec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, as Newfoundland refused to join. The new Constitution of 1867 separated provincial powers from those of a federal government, akin to the U.S. system. Its most controversial part was Article 93, which created a school system divided along religious lines rather than by languages.

One last quote seems appropri-

ate for its "looking back in time" viewpoint. In 1967, writing as an apologist for the first century of Canada as a nation, John PORTER said: "Canada has been described by S.M. LIPSET as elitist rather than equalitarian in its values,...this tendency to value the differences of status and aristocratic modes has been reinforced by the fact that Canada has two charter groups speaking different languages." [25]

This is the somewhat tortured phrasing by which this Professor of Sociology at Carleton University would attribute the failure of Canada to achieve national unity to the de-facto class system put in place by the British. It relegated the *Québecois* to a low social status, which would be a primary force in the loss of one million citizens who voted with their feet by emigrating. Honoré was among them in 1873, seeking political as well as economic equality.

The loss of so many of its citizens would alarm leaders of both the government and the Catholic church. It is recorded that there were 40,000 vacant farms in Québec. Finally, in 1875 the provincial authorities did seek to begin a repatriation program, offering land and even free railroad cars in 1879-1880. Unfortunately, these lands were In remote regions, such as the Saguenay-Lake St .John area, the eastern townships, the Gaspe, and even western Canada. [26]

By 1900, almost half of the French-Canadian emigres had returned to *"la belle province "*, which they loved. But another one-half million remained, having built their "Little Canadas " here in New England. The history of their eventual assimilation here is another fascinating story, only now being well documented by their own descendants.

A Postscript: I should state that my recounting of Québec history is intended only to highlight the struggles of our ancestors up to the year 1873. That decade of the 1870's was a "low-point" in many respects, an era when the mission of *La Survivance* was deemed lost by many. Such was not the case. In Québec, among our distant cousins the traditional culture survives, although in a changed form. The foods and the language are there, but the Catholic Church's strictures on daily life are gone, just as here. I encourage those interested to read the modern history of Canada, and to go there. A visitor today will find a vibrant democracy, one which has made giant strides just in the last thirty years. The language problem has been solved by being bilingual, especially among the younger generations in the cosmopolitan cities, who greet you *"Bienvenue"* initially, then "Welcome".

FOOTNOTES

[1] BOUCHETTE, Joseph, *Description Topographique de la Province du Bas Canada*, W. Faden, pub., London, England. 1815, p. 244. In French.

[2] Ibid., p.245.

[3] CORBETT, Edward M., *Quebec Confronts Canada*, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, MD, 1967, p. 15.

[4] HARRIS, Richard C., *The Seigneurial System in Early Canada*, Univ. of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Milwaukee, and London, 1968, p. 154.

[5] Drouin files, of A.F.G.S, Roll 132, Ste. Elisabeth Parish, 1802-1821.

[6] CORBETT, see #3 above, p. 16.

[7] PETRIN, Ronald A., *French-Canadi-*

ans in Massachusetts Politics, 1885-1915, Balch Institute Press, Philadelphia, 1990, p.26.

[8] CREIGHTON, Donald G., *A History of Canada*, a revised and enlarged edition of *Dominion of the North*, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, MA. 1954, pp.212-213.

[9] HARRIS, see #4 above, pp. 224-234.

[10] MUNRO, W.B., *Documents Relating to the Seigneurial Tenure in Canada, 598-1854*, 1908. Reprinted by Greenwood Press, New York, 1968, p. 220.

[11] CREIGHTON, see #8 above, p. 233-234.

[12] Ibid, p.251.

[13] Drouin files, A.F.G.S., Roll 133.

[14] VANCE, James E. Jr, *The North American Railroad, Its Origin, Evolution, and Geography*, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore and London, 1995, pp. 242-243.

[15] Ibid., p. 74.

[16] Sir Charles BAGOT was a career English diplomat. He was Minister to France (1814), U.S. (1815-20), Russia (1820), and Governor-General of Canada, 1841-43. He died in 1843.

[17] MUNRO, see #10 above, p. 241.

[18] According to Webster's New World Dictionary: Socage is an Anglo-French term, deriving from a medieval English system of land tenure in which a tenant held land in return for a fixed payment ...or services to his lord. Essentially, the two legal systems have common roots. Freehold tenure, by comparison, whether of property or of an office, can be for life or with a right to pass it on through inheritance.

[19] MUNRO, see #10 above, pp. 243-246.

[20] Creighton, see #11 above, p. 80.

[21] VANCE, p. 243.

[22] Ibid., p. 286

[23] Ibid., p. 250.

[24] STANLEY, George, *The Canadians, 1867-1967, A Series of Essays on the 100th Anniversary of Confederation.* McMillan, Toronto, 1967, Chapter 2, p. 61.

[25] PORTER, John, from the above cited essay series, Chapter 3, p. 86.

[26] BREAULT, Gerard, *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England*, 1986, The University Press of New England, Hanover, NH and London, p. 82.

A FEW REASONS TO THINK THE WORLD IS CRAZY

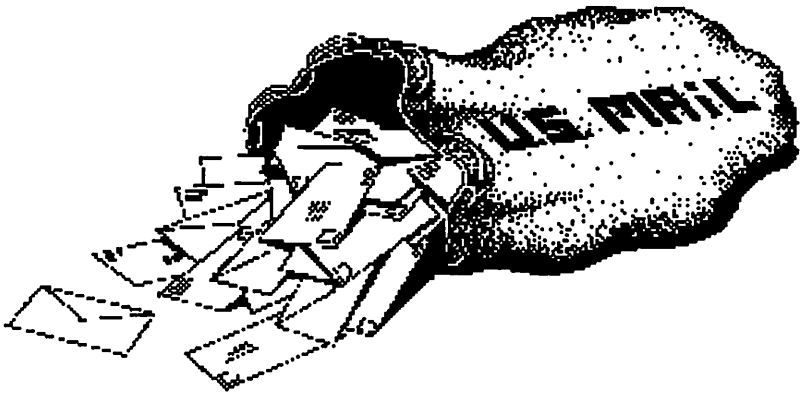
"Life is tough. It's tougher if you're stupid."

My neighbor works in the operations department in the central office of a large bank. Employees in the field call him when they have problems with their computers. One night he got a call from a woman in one of the branch banks who had this question: "I've got smoke coming from the back of my terminal. Do you guys have a fire downtown?"

Police in Radnor, Pennsylvania, interrogated a suspect by placing a metal colander on his head and connecting it with wires to a photocopy machine.

The message "He's lying" was placed in the copier, and police pressed the copy button each time they thought the suspect wasn't telling the truth.

Believing the "lie detector" was working, the suspect confessed.



Did you forget to change your address when you moved??????

Every time the Society sends a mailing to the general membership, we get a lot of returns with bad addresses. These have to be remailed with first class postage.

This is an unnecessary expense for the Society, and an inconvenience for its members.

If you plan to move, please fill out the form below. Doing so will save a lot of trouble for the AFGS and for you!

Name: _____ Member # _____

Old address: _____

_____

New address: _____

_____

Effective date: _____

The post office does not forward bulk mail. If you plan on being at another address for part of the year, you should inform us of that fact.

Please don't tear this book. Photocopy this page.

Ask The Retoucher

by: Eric Curtis M. Basir (Bond)

He's worked in darkrooms, both digital and conventional, newspapers and studios. He runs Photo Grafix, a humble photo retouching studio in Evanston, Illinois, helping genealogists restore and preserve photos and documents with their computers. If he doesn't know the answer, he won't rest until he finds it. Eric Curtis M. Basir (Bond) is at your service: With each Ask The Retoucher column, he'll help you successfully tackle your digital photographic preservation and restoration problems.

Please send your questions–and genealogical society affiliation if appropriate–to questions@abetterreality.net for future Ask The Retoucher columns. You can learn more about Eric and his work online at www.abetterreality.net.

Tess asks:

"I have been assigned to scan and archive thousands of photos from my organization's history. I know very little about photography, but am comfortable with computers, which is why I was given the assignment.

I am confused by the conflicting information on the web about the best way to go about scanning the photos. Since the files are for archive purposes, I am assuming that they may be needed for producing prints at some later date, and I want to make sure that I don't set the scanner resolution too low.

Most of the photos are in B&W and some are color. Is 300 ppi good enough? I tried scanning a couple at 600 ppi and it took forever (I'm assuming because the files are so large). Do you have any insight here?"

Answer:

I haven't used PhotoImpact, nor have I found a demonstration copy on which to try it. So I'll need to skip anything dealing with that program (Possibly, one of our experienced readers would submit a brief review). However, there are fundamentals that span all programs.

LaserSoft Imaging Silverfast SE is something you can use to replace the software that came with your Epson scanner. It helps you scan and export images to PhotoImpact. Unless the Epson driver software is too troublesome, I wouldn't worry about it.

Disclaimer: Since you haven't had full-time experience with photography and retouching, I would advise you to consult with a professional and price out services. I say this because you are dealing with a huge archive that will be

used for generations to come. It must be done correctly. So my advice is based on mostly conjecture. I will help you best I can. But I must be forthright (smile).

That said, I will share some general figures on scanning dimensions (magnified size) and resolution (dots or--more correctly--pixels per inch). These are generally accepted standards. However, as you see, opinions vary greatly.

Yes, 600 ppi can be quite large--especially when you have a large original.

All slides and negatives should be scanned in color at the highest resolution your Epson software will input (1333 to 3200 pixel minimum). Color scans provide the most detail. The grayscale setting does not provide as much detail. Do not touch the magnification or output size readings and controls.

I recommend that prints smaller than 5x7 should be scanned at 300ppi. Magnification or output size should be 200%. 8x10 and larger prints should be scanned at 300 ppi at 100%.

Do not engage any sharpening, filters or color correction tools within the Epson scanner software. One exception are the de-screening filters which help you make a scan from printed images without moire or swirling patterns. Any corrections should be done in PhotoImpact.

Save the images as .TIF (PC compatible) without compression. Follow-up with a redundant archiving scheme. For example, when I archive my work, I write them to two separate CD-ROMs. Subsequently, I'll have a duplicate of the archive in case one of the disks become corrupt and unusable.

Wilber asks:

"Do you have any information from the classes you teach on Adobe Photoshop Elements? I am trying to learn how to use these programs."

Answer:

Yes. But my handouts are in outline fashion, and guide the student as I instruct them. So they would be somewhat useless for you if you couldn't drive up to Evanston, IL (USA) once a week!

However, I require them to purchase a book called "Teach Yourself Visually Adobe Photoshop [or Photoshop Elements]" by Woolridge. It's a wonderful book. It's brief, full of diagrams and photos. It's just the basics, but perfect for beginners. You can find the book almost anywhere books are sold.

Just so you know, you can download free trials of Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Photoshop Elements at http://www.adobe.com/support/downloads/main.html.

Edith asks:

"What is the difference between a TIFF, BITMAP, EPS and JPG? Why would you save something as one over the other? For example, you scan in a photo or drawing into photoshop what format do you save it in and why."

Answer:

These are all different formats to

save photos or other artwork for various types of output or publication.

TIFF or TIF is a reliable format to save photos in. It retains all detail and is universally understood by graphic software programs worldwide. Although it offers a loss-less compression scheme, the file size tends to be large. However, don't let large file size determine if you plan to save in .TIF. I personally recommend that everyone archive their work using this format.

Bitmap–the file format–is similar to TIF, but it's the standard file format for Windows and DOS compatible computers. Various sub-settings are offered, including a loss-less compression scheme called RLE. However, unless you completely understand the difference between Indexed Color, RGB, 4-bit and 8-bit, don't change the settings.

Bitmap–the image mode–is different in that it gives the photo the appearance of a heavily contrasted photocopy.

EPS is a format used for photos and drawings to be used in page layout programs for publications. The format allows fonts and crisp lines without jagged edges. This format is good for artwork created in "vector" and layout creation software.

JPG is used for photos that need to be sent through the internet or displayed on web pages. It makes files very small and fast to send. However it compresses the detail and color, causing damage to the photo. It can be dangerous to archive photos in .JPG format. I recommend .TIF for archives.

Did you know some of these file format names are actually acronyms?

TIF: Tagged Imaged File Format.
EPS: Encapsulated Postscript.
JPG: Joint Photographic Experts Group.

BJ asks:

"I am considering archiving about 2,000 pictures in digital format. My goal is to save them (i.e. have a backup copy), put them in online computer albums for sharing and e-mailing. I don't know much about scanners. I don't want to scan 2,000 by hand.

I have heard that some scanners have "photo feeders" much like a copy machine does. Can you recommend some scanners (under $200) which would fit all of the above. I get confused when I read about PPI, etc. I hear this OCR technology for regular documents is good too.

"What's a good printer to buy (something that does not run out of ink fast and can make photos that look like real photos)."

Answer:

If you desire quality and less problems, you are probably going to spend a bit of money. Otherwise, it will be like installing your own plumbing with no professional experience, wasting time and cash, only to see the pipes leaking and making a worse mess that only forces you to call the plumber anyway (speaking from personal experience).

Microtek and Agfa make good scanners for negatives, slides and prints together. To get the most detail and reso-

lution, Nikon makes high-quality dedicated 35mm slide and negative scanner. Of course, I haven't seen anything that beats a laser drum scanner. But at an average price of $50 per scan, most consumers cannot afford one. Nevertheless, I highly recommend that you spend money to get good quality.

I don't know anything to feed film automatically on the consumer level. I suggest you call a computer mail order place or some photo labs and ask how they may be able to help. However, if you dedicate an hour daily to scanning, you may find scanning one at a time to be quite simple over a period of months.

Minimum resolution should be 300 ppi for archival work. You can print out with 150 ppi with a good Epson photo printer. 72 ppi is good for internet stuff. But always start at 300 ppi and make a separate file for lower ppi. Avoid keeping the lower ppi versions and you'll avoid unnecessary duplicates and confusion.

OCR is great for extracting text from documents. I wouldn't suggest using it for handwriting and documents that have artwork you want to keep. Use the regular reflective scanning process. If a scanner has OCR software, you will find it useful for extracting data. It's not perfect! Be sure to do a spell check afterwards.

As far as the digital camera goes, I can't help much. But you should try the following sites:

http://www.dpreview.com
http://www.shortcourses.com

AUTHORS' GUIDELINES

Subject Matter: *JMS* publishes articles of interest to people of French Canadian descent. Articles dealing with history and genealogy are of primary interest, although articles on related topics will be considered. Especially desirable are articles dealing with sources and techniques, i.e. "how-to guides."

Length: Length of your article should be determined by the scope of your topic. Unusually long articles should be written in such a way that they can be broken down into two or more parts. *Surnames should be capitalized.*

Style: A clear, direct conversational style is preferred. Keep in mind that most of our readers have average education and intelligence. An article written above that level will not be well received.

Manuscripts: This publication is produced on an IBM-compatible computer, using state of the art desktop publishing software. While this software has the capability to import text from most word-processing programs, we prefer that you submit your article in straight ASCII text or in WordPerfect 8 format on 3.5" floppy or ZIP disks. If you do not use an IBM-compatible computer, or do not have access to a computer, your manuscript should be typewritten on 8.5" x 11" paper. It should be double-spaced with a 1-inch margin all around. If notes must be used, endnotes are preferable over footnotes. A bibliography is desirable.

Illustrations: Our software is capable of importing graphics in most IBM-compatible formats. We prefer the JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group) for all illustrations. You may also submit printed black-and white photographs.

Other Considerations: Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all material submitted. All material published in *Je Me Souviens* is copyrighted and becomes the property of the AFGS. All material submitted for publication must be original. Previously published material, except that which is in the public domain, will be accepted only if it is submitted by the author and is accompanied by a signed release from the previous publisher. Articles that promote a specific product or service, or whose subject matter is inappropriate, will be rejected.

Members' Corner: Members' Corner is a section whose purpose is to provide a conduit by which our members may contact each other for the purpose of exchanging information. This is a service provided for members only at no cost on a space-available basis. You may submit short items (one or two paragraphs) in the following categories:

Work in Progress - If you are involved in an unusual project or are researching a specific subject or surname, you may use Members' Corner to announce this fact. Members able to help are encouraged to contact you.

Books Wanted - If you are searching for a book or books to aid you in your research, you may advertise your need here. Please include as much information as possible about the books, i.e. title, author, publisher, publication date, etc.

Books for Sale - We will accept items for used books which you wish to sell, or for books you have personally authored. Be sure to include the name of the book and your asking price. Book dealers may not use this space. Book dealers are encouraged to purchase advertising space in this journal. Rates are published on the inside front cover.

Cousin Search - If you have a living relative with whom you have lost contact, you may use this space to help in your search. Include the person's full name and last known address, along with any other pertinent information.

All submissions to Members' Corner must include your name, address and phone number. Deadlines are 15 December for the Spring issue, and 15 June for the Fall issue. Keep in mind that this is a semiannual publication. Where time is important, items should be sent to AFGnewS.

To Submit Articles: Mail all submissions to Paul P. Delisle, P.O. Box 830, Woonsocket, RI 02895-0870. If you have e-mail capabilities, you can submit articles in this manner at pdelisle1@juno.com.

Excess Books

Several years ago, we purchased the inventory of books owned by the former Drouin Institute. Like most collections purchased in one lot, there were books which we already owned. The following contains the titles of those duplicates. If you are looking to purchase a particular repertoire, please take a few minutes to look over this listing. Some of these books may be out of print and available no where else at this time.

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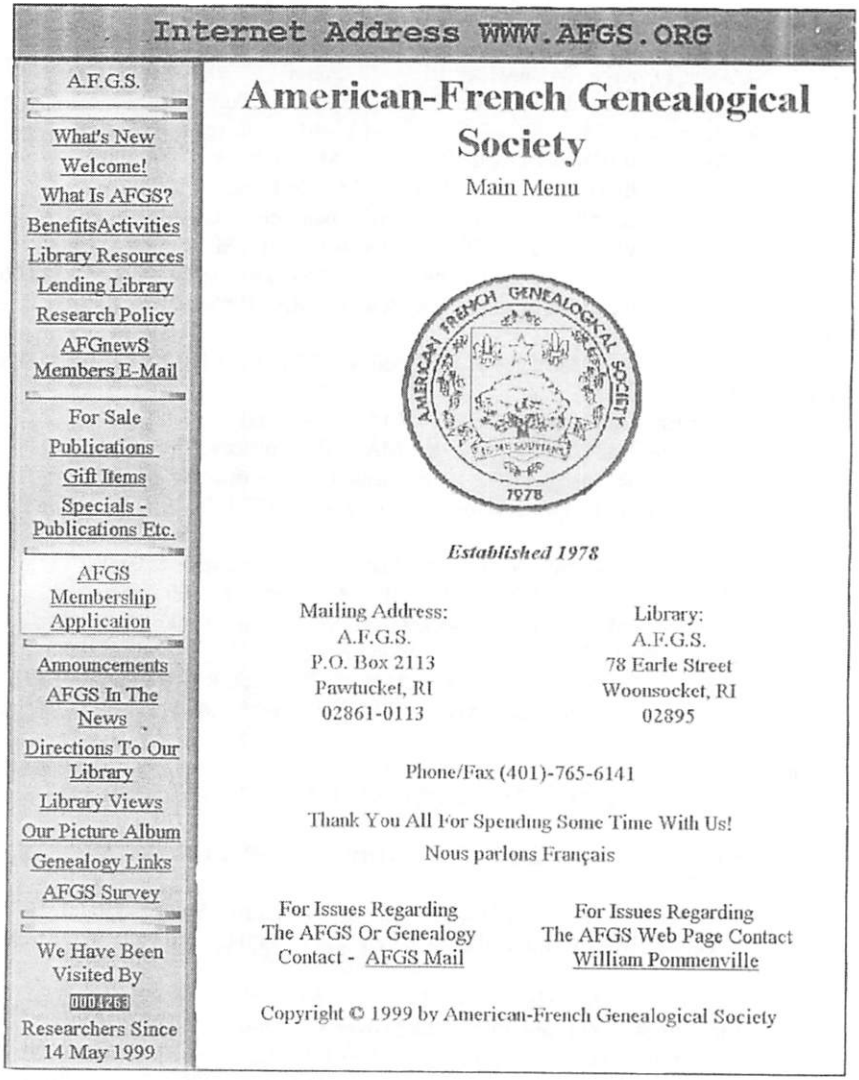

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Volume 27, Number1, Spring 2004

A FEW REASONS TO THINK THE WORLD IS CRAZY

"Life is tough. It's tougher if you're stupid."

My daughter went to a local Taco Bell and ordered a taco. She asked the person behind the counter for "minimal lettuce." He said he was sorry, but they only had iceberg.

PARTING SHOTS

Paul P. Delisle, Editor

The first order of business is an error we made in attributing the author of the article entitled *Franco-Americans in the Civil War Era* on page 19 of the Autumn issue. The sole author is Damien Bélanger. We sincerely apologize for this error, and we compliment the author for his excellent work. Too little has been written about the French-Canadians in this low point in our nation's history.

Our Society's 25th anniversary is behind us now, and we look forward to the future. From where we stand, it looks like a very bright future. The membership is growing, the research library is growing and we look forward to celebrate our Fiftieth Anniversary.

The acquisition of the Drouin Collection in Montréal several years ago put us in the major leagues of French-Canadian genealogical research. The Auclair collection of memorabilia puts the Society in the forefront of local-area research. Woonsocket has long been known as a center of French-Canadian immigration, if not *the center*. The first French-Canadian native came to Woonsocket in the 1850's. The population of other ethnic groups is rapidly growing in Woonsocket, yet to this day we hear *Woonsocket French* spoken around town; and we will for many years to come.

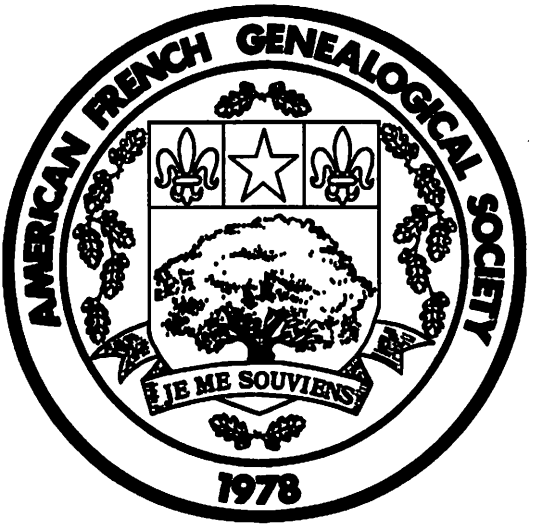
A FEW REASONS TO THINK THE WORLD IS CRAZY

"Life is tough. It's tougher if you're stupid."

I work with an individual who plugged her power strip back into itself and for the life of her couldn't understand why her system would not turn on.

I live in a semi rural area. We recently had a new neighbor call the local township administrative office to request the removal of the Deer Crossing sign on our road. The reason: too many deer were being hit by cars, and he didn't want them to cross there anymore.

I was at the airport, checking in at the gate when an airport employee asked, "Has anyone put anything in your baggage without your knowledge?"To which I replied, "If it was without my knowledge, how would I know?"He smiled knowingly and nodded, "That's why we ask."



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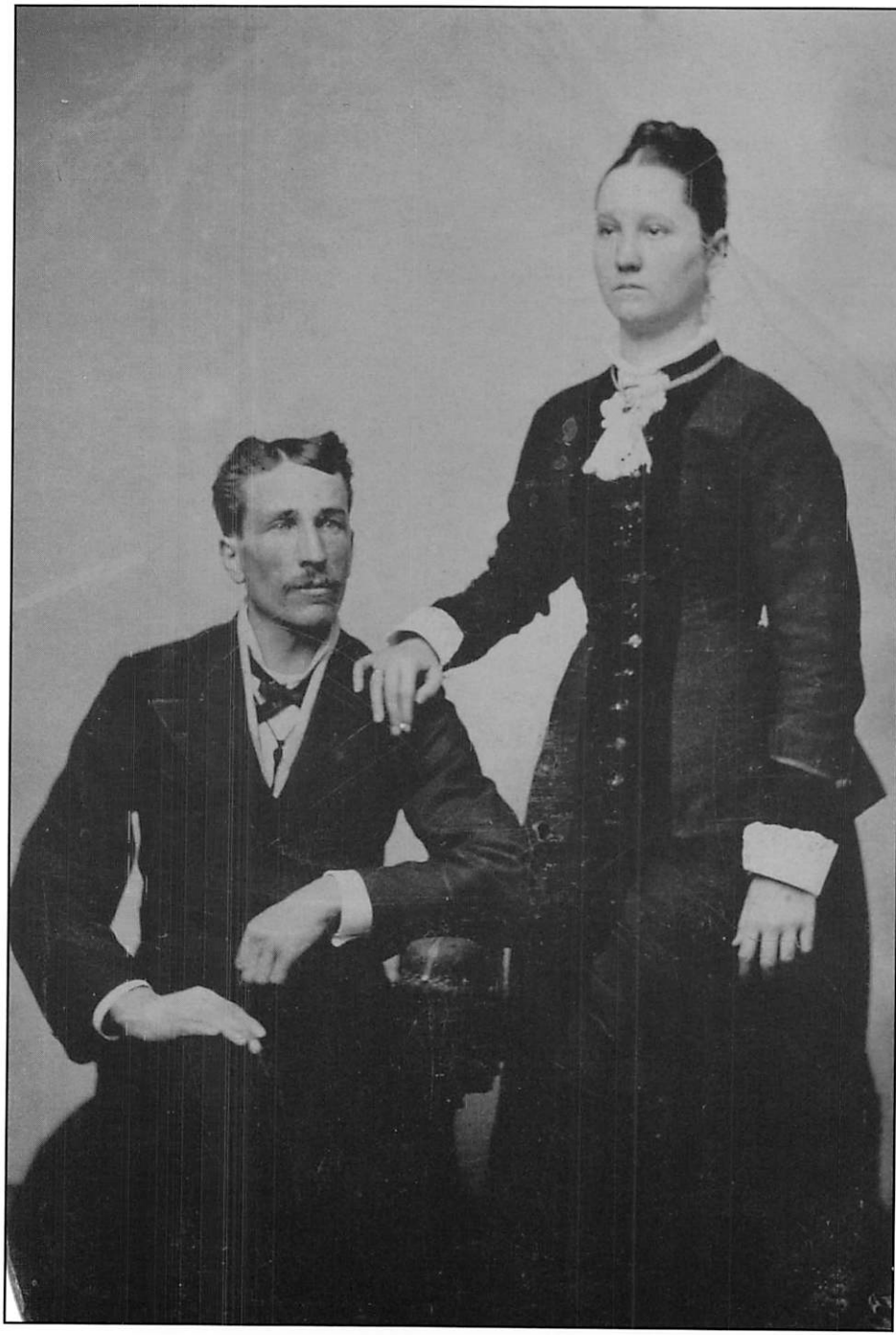

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